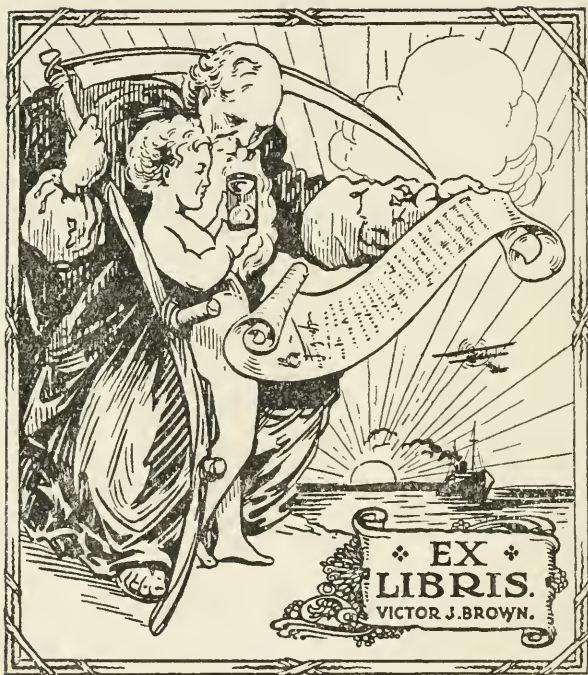




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THE BARBER'S CHAIR,
AND
THE HEDGEHOG LETTERS.



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THE BARBER'S CHAIR,

AND

THE HEDGEHOG LETTERS.

BY *William*
DOUGLAS JERROLD.
///

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY HIS SON,

BLANCHARD JERROLD.



London:

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY.

1874.

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INTRODUCTION.

THESE dialogues on passing events appeared in Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper, a journal started by my father in 1846. They became at once very popular. The idea was a fresh and happy one that, like "Caudle's Lectures," went home to all classes of readers. Indeed, in Mrs Nutts we have indications of Mrs Caudle's vein: Mrs Nutts might have been a poor relation of the Caudle family. Nutts is such a barber as the Gossip was, who for many years occupied a little shop against Temple Bar—with one door in the City and the other in Middlesex. He was the most talkative, the most knowing, the most confident of barbers. His mind had possibly been sharpened by the distinguished men from the Temple, and from the Fleet Street newspaper offices, whom he had shaved. He had more than

a smattering of literary and forensic gossip : he was something of a humourist, and, like Mr Nutts, it took very much in the way of news to surprise him. Mr Nutts observes that he has had so much news in his time, that he has lost the flavour of it. He could relish nothing weaker than a battle of Waterloo. To this state of satiety had the Temple Bar barber shaved and talked himself.

Indeed it is my firm belief that the "Barber's Chair," which in 1847 was set up in the offices of Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper, next door to the Strand Theatre, was the chair taken from Temple Bar; and that the most loquacious and original of barbers sat for Mr Nutts.

These weekly humorous commentaries on passing events, made by Mr Nutts and his customers, carry me back to the bright time when they were written. It was about the happiest epoch of my father's life. He had won his place ; he had troops of friends ; he could gather Dickens, Leigh Hunt, Maclise, Macready, Mark Lemon, Lord Nugent, and other merry companions, to dine under his great tent by the mulberry-tree at West Lodge ; he was in good health—a rare enjoyment in his case ; and his own newspaper and magazine were

prospering. On the stage, in the volumes of *Punch*, and in his own organs, he was addressing the public. All his intellectual forces were at their brightest. With Dickens, Mr Forster, Leech, and Lemon he had recently delighted picked audiences as Master Stephen in "Every Man in his Humour." He wrote about this time to Dickens that his newspaper was a substantial success; and that henceforth he was beyond the reach of stern Fortune, who had treated him roughly for many a weary year. Dickens, in reply, said, "Two numbers of the 'Barber's Chair' have reached me. It is a capital idea, and capable of the best and readiest adaptation to things as they arise."

Suddenly the glowing lights of the picture faded. A daughter who was living in Guernsey fell dangerously ill; and he was called away from the editorial chair, and from the "Barber's Chair." He was so affected by the danger in which he found my sister that he could not write a line. Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper began to appear without Mr Nutts and his customers; and each week the newsboys would ask, "Any Barber?"

Answered in the negative, they would take a

less number of copies. Week after week, while my father remained away, the circulation of the paper fell. Not only was his pen absent, but he had weighted it with heavy contributors, who were possibly sound, but unquestionably dull. He could not say nay to a friend ; and directly he had installed himself as editor of a weekly journal, he was besieged. He would take a series, thinking rather of the pleasure he was giving the writer than of the way in which the public would receive it. Thus he became entangled in a currency series of interminable length, that tried the patience of readers to the utmost. In Angus Reach he had a lively and spirited colleague, and Frederick Guest Tomlins was a fair manager ; but these could not make way, in his absence, against the dull men, and the decline of circulation continued. My father returned to London to find a newspaper which he had left a handsome property, dwindled to a concern that hardly paid its expenses.

The "Barber's Chair" was resumed, and with it the flagging paper revived. Messrs Nutts, Nosebag, Tickle, Bleak, Slowgoe, and the rest of the authorities of the barber's shop, talked about the events

of the week in the old sprightly manner. Nutts and his wife cross to France, and the lady is rudely treated at the Customhouse. They were searched, said Nutts, as though they had brought a cutler's shop and a cotton-mill in every one of their pockets. Slowgoe reproaches the barber as the advocate of universal peace, "and all that sort of stuff;" and defends war on the ground that "there's nothing so little as doesn't eat up something as is smaller than itself."

One week, a poor babe is picked up in a basket, on a doorstep: the same week the papers have an account of the betrothal of the young Queen of Spain to a man whom she loathed. She sobbed as she was forced to plight her troth to him. The two cases are contrasted in the barber's shop. On the one hand we have Betsy of Bermondsey, and on the other Isabella of Spain. Bessy gets on in life "as a football gets on by all sorts o' kicks and knocks." Betsy has the humblest fortune, but she gives her heart away, and is all the lighter and rosier for the gift. And "she marries the baker, and in as quick a time as possible she's in a little shop, with three precious babbies, selling penny rolls, and almost making 'em twopennies by the good-natur

she throws about 'em." Then comes the case of the Queen of Spain—a "poor little merino lamb!" Next week Mr Bleak reads glorious news—the Duke of Marlborough intends shortly to take up his permanent residence at Blenheim Palace. Whereupon Nosebag observes, "Well, that's somethin' to comfort us for the 'tato blight;" and he wonders why the papers that tell the people when dukes and lords change their houses, don't also tell them when they change their coats. Nutts supplies an instance: "We are delighted to inform our enlightened public that the Marquis of Londonderry appeared yesterday in a bran-new patent paletot. He will wear it for the next fortnight, and then return to his usual blue for the season." Gilbert à Beckett had ridiculed the Court newsman and the Jenkinsons of the period, years before. One bit was especially good: "Her Royal Highness the Princess Victoria walked yesterday morning in Kensington Gardens. We are given to understand that her Royal Highness used both legs."

Farther on there is a conversation in the shop on the possibility of contemplating such a social revolution as the marriage of a princess with a commoner. "What!" cries Slowgoe, "marry a

princess to a husband with no royal blood ! do you know the consequence ? What would you think if the eagle was to marry the dove ? ” Nutts replies, “ Why, I certainly shouldn’t think much of the eggs.” They were, for the most part, “ dreadful Radicals ” in Mr Nutts’ shop. They said many good things, however. Mr Tickle remarks, “ Married people grin the most at a wedding, ’cause other folks can get into a scrape as well as themselves.” Slowgoe opines that “ the world isn’t worth fifty years’ purchase,” because the railway people are using up all the iron, which “ we may look upon as the bones of the world.” Nutts says, “ The real gun-cotton’s in petticoats.” Again, “ Family pride, and national pride, to be worth anything, should be like a tree : taking root years ago, but having apples every year.” He describes Justice as keeping a chandler’s shop in the Old Bailey, to “ serve out penn’orths to poor people.”

In due course the dialogues of Mr Nutts and his customers were brought to a close. The sage reflections of Mr Tickle were left unreported, albeit at the very last he was at his best. “ How often,” he remarked to loyal Mr Slowgoe, “ has Fortune crowned where she ought to have bonneted.”

Other series were essayed in the newspaper. In 1848 my father went to Paris, well furnished with letters of introduction to Lamartine and the prominent men of the Republican Government, to write a number of papers on the aspects of the French capital. He would never speak about that journey afterwards. He was not at home by the banks of the Seine. He hated turmoil. He could never write in a hurry, nor under uncomfortable circumstances. He felt directly he had reached the hotel that he had made a mistake, and that descriptive reporting was no gift of his. His secretary was sent abroad to gather bits of information, and brought back a budget of peculiar and exclusive news in the evening—but it was left unused. Even the letters of introduction remained upon the writing-table; and they were never delivered. Only a few columns of writing ever reached the newspaper; and “Douglas Jerrold in Paris” had been advertised far and wide!

In brief, Douglas Jerrold had tired of his newspaper. He could not work up against the tide. The break in the “Barber’s Chair,” and the consequent loss of circulation, had never been recovered; whereas the Currency series, signed Aladdin, was

interminable, and its dulness provoked protests and wearied out subscribers. The papers were perhaps admirable. They were written by a very clever man. But they should have been in the *Banker's Magazine*, or the *Economist*, and not in the columns of a popular newspaper. The end was a heavy loss, which might have been substantial fortune. It was a bitter result, brought about by the editor's inability to sustain a continuous effort; and by his easy-going friendship, that led him to open his columns to incompetent writers. This latter editorial defect harmed the *Illuminated Magazine*, and hastened the death of the *Shilling Magazine*. Both were suffocated by importunate dullards, who would besiege the editor in his study, and never leave him till they had obtained his consent to print a score of articles from their fatally facile pens.

Of Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper there remains only—"The Barber's Chair." It is a bright remnant, however; and this, I trust, the reader will fully admit.

BLANCHARD JERROLD.



THE BARBER'S CHAIR.

CHAPTER I.

SCENE.—*A Barber's Shop in Seven Dials.* NUTTS
(*the Barber*) shaving NOSEBAG. PUCKER, BLEAK,
TICKLE, SLOWGOE, NIGHTFLIT, LIMPY, and other
customers, come in and go out.

NIGHTFLIT. Any news, Mr Nutts? Nothin'
in the paper?

Nutts. Nothing.

Nightflit. Well, I'm blest if, according to you,
there ever is. If an earthquake was to swallow up
London to-morrow, you'd say, "There's nothin' in
the paper : only the earthquake."

Nutts. The fact is, Mr Nightflit, I've had so
much news in my time, I've lost the flavour of it.
'Couldn't relish anything weaker than a battle of
Waterloo now. Even murders don't move me. No;
not even the pictures of 'em in the newspapers,
with the murderer's hair in full curl, and a dress-

coat on him : as if blood, like prime Twankay, was to be recommended to the use of families.

Tickle. There you go agin, Nutts: always biting at human natur. It's only that we're used to you, else I don't know who'd trust you to shave him.

Slowgoe. Tell me—Is it true what I have heard ? Are the Whigs really in ?

Nutts. In ! Been in so long that they're half out by this time. As you're always so long after everybody else, I wonder you aint in with 'em.

Bleak. Come now ! I was born a Whig, and won't stand it. In the battle of Constitution aren't the Whigs always the foremost ?

Nutts. Why, as in other battles, that sometimes depends upon how many are pushing 'em behind.

Tickle. There's another bite ! Why, Nutts, you don't believe good of nobody. What a cannibal you are ! It's my belief you'd live on human *arts*.

Nutts. Why not ? It's what half the world lives upon. Whigs and Tories. Tell you what ; you see them two cats. One of them I call Whig, and t' other Tory ; they are so like the two-legged ones. You see Whig there, a-wiping his whiskers. Well, if he in the night kills the smallest mouse that ever squeaked, what a clatter he does kick up ! He keeps my wife and me awake for hours ; and sometimes—now this is so like Whig—to catch a

mouse not worth a fardin', he'll bring down a row of plates or a teapot or a punch-bowl worth half-a-guinea. And in the morning when he shows us the measly little mouse, doesn't he put up his back and purr as loud as a bagpipe, and walk in and out my legs, for all the world as if the mouse was a dead rhinoceros. Doesn't he make the most of a mouse, that's hardly worth lifting with a pair of tongs and throwing in the gutter? Well, that's Whig all over. Now there's Tory lying all along the hearth, and looking as innocent as though you might shut him up in a dairy with nothin' but his word and honour. Well, when he kills a mouse, he makes hardly any noise about it. But this I will say, he's a *little* greedier than Whig; he'll eat the varmint up, tail and all. No conscience for the matter. Bless you, I've known him make away with rats that he must have lived in the same house with for years.

Bleak. Well, I hate a man that has no party. Every man that is a man ought to have a side.

Nutts. Then I'm not a man; for I'm all round like a ninepin. That will do, Mr Nosebag. Now, Mr Slowgoe, I believe you are next. (SLOWGOE takes the chair.)

Slowgoe. Is it true what I have heard, that the Duke of Wellington (a great man the Duke; only Catholic 'Mancipation is a little spick upon him)—

is it true that the Duke's to have a 'questrian statue on the Hyde Park arch?

Tickle. Why, it *was* true, only the cab and bus men have petitioned Parliament against it. They said it was such bad taste 'twould frighten their horses.

Slowgoe. Shouldn't wonder. And what's become of it?

Tickle. Why, it's been at livery in the Harrow Road, eating its head off, these two months. Sent up the iron trade wonderful. Tenpenny nails are worth a shilling now.

Slowgoe. Dear me, how trade fluctuates! And what *will* Government do with it?

Tickle. Why, Mr Hume's going to cut down the army estimates—going to reduce 'em—our Life Guardsmen; one of the two that always stands at the Horse Guards; and vote the statue of the Duke there instead. Next to being on the top of a arch, the best thing, they say, is to be under it. Besides, there's economy. For Mr Hume has summed it up; and in two hundred years, five weeks, two days, and three hours, the statue—bought at cost price, for the horse is going to the dogs—will be cheaper by five and twopence than a Life-Guardsman's pay for the same time.

Slowgoe. The Duke's a great man, and it's my opinion——

Nutts. Never have an opinion when you're being shaved. If you whobble your tongue about in that way, I shall nick you. Sorry to do it ; but can't wait for your opinion. Have a family, and must go on with my business. Anything doing at the playhouses, Mr Nosebag ?

Nosebag. Well, I don't know ; not much. I go on sticking their bills in course, as a matter of business ; but I never goes. Fash'nable hours—for now I always teas at seven—won't let me. As I say, I stick their posters, but I haven't the pride in 'em I used to have.

Tickle. How's that, Nosey ?

Nosebag. Why, seriously, they have so much gammon. I've stuck "Overflowing Houses" so often, I wonder I haven't been washed off my feet. And then the "Tremendous Hits" I've contin'allly had in my eye—Oh, for a lover of the real drama—you don't know my feelings !

Nutts. The actors do certainly bang away in large type now.

Nosebag. And the worst of it is, Mr Nutts, there seems a fate in it ; for the bigger the type the smaller the player. I could show you a playbill with Mr Garrick's name in it not the eighth of an inch. And now, if you want to measure on the wall "Mr Snooks as Hamlet," why, you must take a three-foot rule to do it. Don't talk on it. The

players break my heart ; but I go on sticking 'em of course.

Nutts. To be sure. Business before feelings. Have you seen Miss Rayshall, the French actress at the St James's ?

Nosebag. Not yet. I'm waiting till she goes to the 'Aymarket.

Tickle. But she isn't a-going there.

Nosebag. Isn't she? How can she help it? Being of the French stage, somebody's safe to translate her.

Tickle. Ha, so I thought. But all the French players have been put on their guard; and there isn't one of 'em will go near the Draymatic Authors' Society without two policemen.

Pucker. Well, I'm not partic'lar; but really, gen'l'men, to talk in this way about plays and players, on a Sunday morning too, is a shocking waste of human life. I was about to say——

Nutts. Clean as a whistle, Mr Slowgoe. Mr Tickle, now for you. (*TICKLE takes the chair.*)

Pucker. I was about to say, it's nice encouragement to go a-soldiering—this flogging at Hounslow.

Nutts. Yes, it's glory turned a little inside out. For my part, I shall never see the ribbands in the hat of a recruiting soldier again—the bright blue and red—that I shan't think of the weals and cuts in poor White's back.

Pucker. Or his broken heart-strings.

Nutts. What a very fine thing a soldier is, isn't he? See him in all his feathers, and with his sword at his side, a sword to cut laurels with—and in my 'pinion, all the laurels in the world was never worth a bunch of wholesome watercresses. See him, I say, dressed and pipeclayed and polished, and turned out as if a soldier was far above a working man, as a working man's above his dog—see him in all his parade furbelows, and what a splendid cretur he is, isn't he? How stupid 'prentices gape at him, and feel their foolish hearts thump at the drum parchment, as if it was played upon by an angel out of heaven! And how their blood—if it was as poor as London milk before—burns in their bodies, and they feel for the time—and all for glory—as if they could kill their own brothers! And how the women——

Female voice. (From the back.) What are you talking about the women, Mr Nutts? Better go on with your shaving, like a husband and a father of a family, and leave the women to themselves.

Nutts. Yes, my dear. (*Confidentially.*) You know my wife? Strong-minded cretur.

Pucker. For my part, to say nothin' against Mrs Nutts, I hate women of strong minds. To me they always seem as if they wanted to be men, and

couldn't. I love women as women love babies, all the better for their weakness.

Nosebag. Go on about the sojer.

Nutts. (*In a low voice.*) As for women, isn't it dreadful to think how they *do* run after the pipeclay? See 'em in the Park—if they don't stare at rank and file, and fall in love with hollow squares by the heap. It is so nice, they think, to walk arm-in-arm with a bayonet. Poor gals! I do pity 'em. I never see a nice young woman courtin' a soldier—or the soldier courtin' her—as it may be, that I don't say to myself, "Ha! it's very well, my dear. You think him a sweet cretur, no doubt; and you walk along with him as if you thought the world ought to shake with the sound of his spurs and the rattling of his sword, and you hold on to his arm as if he was a giant that was born to take the wall of everybody as wasn't sweetened with pipeclay. Poor gal! You little think that that fine fellow—that tremendous giant—that noble cretur with mustarshis to frighten a dragon, may to-morrow morning be stript to his skin, and tied up, and lashed till his blood—his blood, dearer to you than the blood in your own good-natured heart—till his blood runs, and the skin's cut from him;—and his officer, who has been, so he says, 'devilishly' well-whipt at schools perhaps, and therefore thinks flogging very gentlemanly—and his officer looks on

with his arms crossed, as if he was looking at the twisting of an opera-dancer, and not at the struggling and shivering of one of God's mangled creturs—and the doctor never feels the poor soul's pulse (because there is no pulse among privates), and the man's taken to the hospital to live or to die, according to the farriers that lashed him. You don't think, poor gal, when you look upon your sweetheart, or your husband, as it may be, that your sweetheart, or the father of your children, may be tied and cut up this way to-morrow morning, and only for saying 'Hollo' in the dark, without putting a 'sir' at the tail of it. No: you never think of this, young woman; or a red coat, though with ever so much gold-lace upon it, would look like so much raw flesh to you."

Nosebag. I wonder the women don't get up a Anti-Bayonet 'Sociation—take a sort of pledge not to have a sweetheart that lives in fear of a cat.

Slowgoe. Doesn't the song say, "None but the brave deserve the fair"?

Nosebag. Well, can't the brave deserve the fair without deserving the cat-o'-nine-tails?

Nutts. It's sartinly a pity they should go together. I only know they shouldn't have the chance in my case, if I was a woman.

Mrs Nutts. (From within.) I think, Mr Nutts, you'd better leave the women alone, and——

Nutts. Certainly, my dear. (*Again confidentially.*) She's not at all jealous ; but she can't bear to hear me say anything about the women. She has such a strong mind ! Well, I was going to say, if I was a sojer, and was flogged——

Nosebag. Don't talk any more about it, or I shan't eat no dinner. Talk o' somethin' else.

Slowgoe. Tell me—Is it true what I have heard ? Have they christened the last little Princess ? And what's the poppet's name ?

Nosebag. Her name ? Why, Hél-ena Augusta Victoria.

Slowgoe. Bless me ! Helleena——

Nosebag. Nonsense ! You must sound it Hél—there's a-goin' to be a Act of Parliament about it. Hél—with a haccent on the first synnable.

Slowgoe. What's a accent ?

Nosebag. Why, like as if you stamped upon it. Here's a good deal about this christening in this here newspaper ; printed, they do say, by the 'thority of the Palace. The man that writes it wears the royal livery ; scarlet run up and down with gold. He says (*reads*), " The particulars of this interesting event are subjoined ; and they will be perused by the readers with all the attention which the *holy rite as well* as the lofty ranks of the parties present must command."

Nutts. Humph ! " Holy rite " and " lofty

rank," as if a little Christian was any more a Christian for being baptized by a archbishop! Go on.

Nosebag. Moreover, he says (*reads*), "The ceremony was of the *loftiest and most magnificent character, befitting* in that respect at once the service of that all-powerful God who commanded His creatures to worship Him in pomp and glory *under the old law.*"

Nutts. Hallo! Stop there. What have we to do with the "old law" in christening? I thought the "old law" was only for the Jews. Isn't the "old law" repealed for Christians?

Nosebag. Be quiet. (*Reads.*) "The vase which contained the water was brought from the river of Jordan"—

Nutts. Well, when folks was christened then, I think there was no talk about magnificence; not a word about the pomp of the "old law." Don't read it through. Give us the little nice bits here and there.

Nosebag. Well, here's a procession with field-marshals in it, and major-generals, and generals.

Nutts. There wasn't so much as a full private on the banks of the Jordan.

Nosebag. And "the whole of the costumes of both ladies and gentlemen were very elegant and magnificent; those of the former were uniformly

white, of valuable lace, and the richest satins or silks. The gentlemen were either in uniform or full Court dress.

Nutts. Very handsome indeed ; much handsomer than any coat of camel's hair.

Nosebag. The Master of the Royal Buckhounds was present——

Nutts. With his dogs ?

Nosebag. Don't be wicked,—and “the infant Princess was dressed in a rich robe of Honiton lace over white satin.”

Nutts. Stop. What does the parson say ? “Dost thou in the name of this child renounce the devil and all his works, the *vain pomp and glory* of this world ?

Nosebag. (*Reads.*) “The Duke of Norfolk appeared in his uniform as Master of the Horse. The Duke of Cambridge wore the Orders of the Garter, the Bath, St Michael, and St George. Earl Granville appeared”——

Nutts. That will do. There was no “vain pomp,” and not a bit of “glory.”





CHAPTER II.

NUTTS. Now, Mr Slowgoe, when you've gone through the alphabet of that paper, I'm ready.

Slowgoe. Just one minute.

Nutts. Minutes, Mr Slowgoe, are the small-change of life. Can't wait for nobody. I'll take you then, Mr Limpy. (*LIMPY takes the chair.*) It makes my flesh crawl to see some folks with a newspaper. They go through it for all the world like a caterpillar through a cabbage leaf.

Slowgoe. Well, for my part, I like to chew my news. I think a newspaper's like a dinner; doesn't do you half the good if it's bolted. Haven't come to it yet; but tell me—Is it true that the Duke of Wellington's going to repeal flogging?

Tickle. Why, yes; they do say so; but the Duke does nothin' in a hurry. Always likes to take his time. You know at Waterloo he would wait for the Prussians; and only because if he'd

licked the French afore, he didn't know how else to spend the evening.

Slowgoe. I never heard that ; but it's very like the Duke. And there's to be no flogging.

Tickle. No ; it's to be repealed by degrees, like the corn-laws. In nine years' time there won't be a single cat in the British army.

Nosebag. Why should they wait nine years ?

Nutts. Nothin' but reg'lar. You see the cat-o'-nine-tails is one of the institutions of the country, and therefore must be handled very delicate.

When cat's away
Sojers play.

That's been the old notion. And folks—that is, the folks with gold-lace that's never flogged—think to 'bolish the cat at once would bring a blight upon laurels. They think sojers like eels—none the worse for fire for being well skinned.

Tickle. There you are ; biting the 'thorities of your country agin. But since you've taken the story out of my mouth, go on, though every word you speak's a bitter almond.

Nutts. Well, it isn't a thing to talk sugar-plums about, is it ? I'm not a young lady, am I ?

Mrs Nutts. (*From back parlour.*) I wish you'd remember you've a wife and children, Mr Nutts, and never mind young ladies. You can't shave and talk of young ladies too, I'm sure.

Nutts. (*In a low voice.*) It's very odd; she's one of the strongest-minded women, and yet she can never hear me speak of one of the sex without fizzing like a squib.

Nosebag. (*Solemnly.*) Same with 'em all. I suppose it's love.

Nutts. Why, it is; that is, it's jealousy, which is only love with its claws out.

Tickle. Well, claws brings you to the cat again; so go on.

Nutts. To be sure. Well, as I was saying—— (*To Limpy.*) What's the matter? I'm sure this razor would shave a new-born baby; but for a poor man I don't know where you got such a delicate skin. I will say this, Mr Limpy, for one of the swinish multitude, you are the tenderest pork I ever shaved.

Slowgoe. But the Duke of Wellington——

Nutts. Don't hurry me; I'm going to his Grace. Well, they do say that he's going to get rid of the cat by little and little. He knows the worth of knotted cords to the British soldier, and, like a dowager with false curls, can't give 'em all up at once. So there's to be a law that the cat is still to be used upon the British Lion in regimentals, only that the cat is to lose a tail every year.*

* The Duke has, doubtless to the astonishment of Mr Nutt when he shall learn it, suggested a more rapid reformation.

Slowgoe. Is it true?

Nutts. Certain. So you see, with the loss of one tail per annum, in only nine years' time, or in *anno Domino* 1855, every tail will be 'bolished ; that is, the cat with its nine tails will have lost its nine lives, and be defunct and dead.

Slowgoe. I don't like to give an opinion, but that seems a very slow reform.

Nutts. Why, yes : when folks have a tooth that pains 'em, they don't get cured in that fashion. But then, again, it's wonderful with what patience we can bear the toothache of other people.

Noscbag. What horrid things there's been all the week in the papers. Officers of all sorts writing what they've seen done with the cat. Well, if I was a sojer, my red coat would burn like red-hot iron in me ; I should think all the world looked at me, as if they was asking themselves, "I wonder how often *you've* been flayed."

Slowgoe. Bless your heart ! and here's a dreadful matter. James Sayer, a marine on board the *Queen*, sentenced to be hanged for assaulting two sergeants—to be hanged by the neck. And the President says, "James Sayer, I am sorry indeed that I cannot offer you hope that the sentence of this court will not be fully carried out, and I recommend you to prepare yourself to meet your doom."

Bleak. What a difference is made by salt water !

Frederick White, private soldier, is sentenced to be flogged for giving a blow to his sergeant. James Sayer, marine, is to be hanged for the same offence. So a blow afloat and a blow ashore isn't the same thing.

Nutts. But there 'll be no hanging in the case ; they say as much in Parliament, don't they ?

Slowgoe. But it says here the President was "much affected." Why pass sentence, why give no hope ?

Nutts. Why now, I suppose that's what they'd call a fiction of the law ; and when we think what a dry matter all law is, can we wonder that the 'torneys and such folks spice it up with a few lies ? Bless you, if all law was all true, nobody would go on swallowing it. It's the precious fibs that's in it that gives it a flavour, and makes men live, and grow fat upon it.

Slowgoe. It can't be.

Nutts. Tell you 'tis. Was you never on a jury ? La ! bless you, when one of the gen'lemen of the long robe, as they call 'em—one of the conjurors in horse-hair—get hold of 'a fib, or a flaw, or a something to bring a blush into the face of Common-sense, and so put her out of court at once—doesn't he enjoy it ? Doesn't he relish the fiction, as it's called, as if it was his first "Goody Two Shoes" ? He relishes it ; all the bar—'xcept, per-

haps, the conjuror against him—relishes it, and the judge himself. Oh! haven't I seen him with the wrinkles about his eyes like the map of England; haven't I seen him relish it too, for all the world like an old sporting dog that had given up hunting himself, but still did so love the smell of the game!

Tickle. I tell you what it is, Nutts, I feel my blood a-gettin' vinegar all the while I hear you. I feel a-changing from a man to a cruet; and I won't have it. You are so sour, you'd pickle salmon to look at it. Nosebag, tell us something pleasant. What have they done at the playhouse this week?

Nosebag. Why, there's been Miss Faucit at the Hayma'ket, but only for one night. Your very great players now, they're like the new aloe at the Colossyus; they only blossom once in a hundred years, or somethin' of that sort. London's gettin' low for 'em, I s'pose. I have heard—though I know nothin' about what you call the currency—I have heard that there isn't, for any long time, ready gold enough in the country to pay 'em.

Tickle. Couldn't they take 'Chequer bills?

Nosebag. Why, I believe they was offered to a singer last week; but he wouldn't have 'em, 'cause he'd no faith in the Government.

Tickle. Well, and how did the young lady go off?

Nosebag. Never go to a benefit, for fear I should

be taken for a private friend of the actors. But I'm told the—the—what is it?—the *fibula* was another tremendous hit.

Limpy. (*Rising.*) That will do, Mr Nutts. What's the *fibular*?

Nosebag. Why, a emerald buckle that the Irish House of Commons give to Miss Faucit last year for playing in *Antigony*. It was very well to put it in the playbill, 'cause of course it drew so many folks who'd never seen a buckle. Nevertheless, if Mr Webster—and I don't mean to say anything against Mr Webster, not by no means—nevertheless, if he'd known his own interest he would have had five hundred posters with a bold woodcut of that *fibula*. And I should have stuck 'em.

Limpy. And you didn't go to see it?

Nosebag. No; but I shall go next week, if I never go agin. For they do say that Mrs Humby—dear cretur!—is goin' to appear in a thimble presented to her by the ladies'-maids of London. And if anybody ever deserved a bit of plate, Mrs Humby deserves that thimble.

Nutts. Now, Mr Slowgoe. (*SLOWGOE takes the chair.*) There's quite enough discourse of the playhouses, let's talk of serious matters. Have you heard? They've been proposin' in Parliament to make nineteen more bishops, and one of 'em a Bishop of Melton Mowbray.

Tickle. Ha! a sportin' bishop; for the morals of the neighbourhood. And I shouldn't wonder if we've a Bishop of Epsom, and a Bishop of Newmarket, and a Bishop of Ascot, and a Bishop of Doncaster. And very proper. Black aprons may reform blacklegs. Seein' the bishops do so much good, in course they're most wanted in the worst places. They're to be sent in holes and corners of wickedness; jist as my wife hangs bags of camphor about the necks of the little ones when she hears of fevers. Now a bishop—the Bishop of Exeter, for instance (by the way, he's been havin' another row in the House of Lords—he's always at it)—the Bishop of Exeter, what is he, I should like to know, but a big lump of camphor in a bag of black silk hung about the whole neck of the West of England? Why, the good he does nobody knows.

Bleak. (*With newspaper.*) 'Pon my word, when I read these things I do feel ashamed that I'm a man.

Nutts. Daresay; but 'tishn't your fault. What is it?

Bleak. That a good quiet gen'lewoman can't go by herself in a railway carriage without having to scream out for the police! Insulted by a coward with a good coat on him. Thinks himself, I dare say, one of the lords of the creation. Lords!—I call 'em apes.

Nutts. My wife—and I'd advise every lady to do the like—my wife never travels by rail without a pair of scissors. But then she's a woman of sich strong mind!

Slowgoe. So, I see they've been givin' a dinner at Lynn to Lord George Bentinck. He's a great man, Lord George; and they've had him all the way from London to tell him. Made a beautiful speech, I see. Here's a touch after my own heart. He's a-talkin' about the corn-laws, and he says, "When some foreign ship, some Swede or Norwegian or Dane, with an outlandish name for herself and her captain, which neither you nor I could pronounce (*cheers and laughter*), comes into port (*cheers*), I ask you how much this foreigner pays out of his wages to support the trade of your town?" Well, I say, that's what I call talking like a true Briton.

Nutts. To be sure it is; no argument like that. The argument is—the argument that the Norfolk farmers cheer at is, that the Swede and the Norwegian and the Dane have outlandish names; that in fact they aren't called, like the boys in the spelling-book, Jones, Brown, and Robinson. That's the way t' appeal to British bosoms, and Lord George knows it. Bless you! shouldn't wonder, when the farmers went home, if they didn't kill their wives' and daughters' canary-birds

'cause they were all outlandish, and not true-born British linnets. Nothin' like calling names ; every fool can understand mud.

Slowgoe. Still Lord George is a wonderful man. Here he says, in this very speech, "he was eighteen years silent in the House of Commons."

Nosebag. That reminds me of a pantomine I once saw, where there was a wild man that said nothin' all through the piece, and then at last somebody came for'ard, and held up a scroll in gold letters, that said, "*Orson is endowed with reason !*"

Nutts. The worst of them members of Parliament is that, like children when they're backward in their speech, they more than make up for it when they do begin. Like the Thames froze up, when once they've a quick thaw, they threaten to wash the speaker off his legs, and overflow the whole House of Parliament. Great pity some of these members aren't like the Paddington Canal—with locks.

Tickle. There you are agin, 'busin' of the 'thorities. I've read the whole of it, and it was a very pretty bit of speechifying at Lynn. Didn't the Duke of Richmond, too, talk of the battle of Waterloo ? I've no doubt——

Nutts. In course he did. He talks of it when he's asleep. The battle of Waterloo to the Duke

of Richmond is like a wax doll to a little gal. He always will be showing it to company—opening and shutting its eyes, pointing out its red morocco shoes, and white frock, and cherry-coloured sash. I wish the Duke of Wellington would take the battle of Waterloo from him, and lock it up, and only let him bring it in at Apsley House once a year with the dessert.

Slowgoe. Ha ! Nutts, you haven't a good word for nobody. I'm sure it's quite cutting to read what Lord Bentinck and Mr Disraeli say of themselves: each of 'em trying to be smaller than the other one.

Nosebag. Jist like boys at leap-frog. Each in his turn "tucks in his twopenny," that the other may go clean over his head. But then, you see, Mr Slowgoe, like leap-frog, it's only make-game after all.

Slowgoe. I won't have it. The member for S'rewsbury's a great man. What a tongue he has !

Nutts. Very great ; measure tongue and all, and he's very great, to be sure. He reminds me of a—a—dear me !—that thing that lives on wind, that I once saw at Mr Tyler's Zoological Gardens—a—a——

Tickle. Lives on wind ! It can't be nothing but a bagpipe or a chameleon.

Nutts. That's it : a chamelcon. Well, that has

a tongue as long as his body ; but for all that, he can only catch flies with it. And that's the case, I take it, with the member for S'rewsbury. I know it's said he talked for loaves and fishes. And acause Sir Robert wouldn't give him so much as a penny roll, not so much as the smallest sprat that swims in the Treasury, why then——

Slowgoe. Sir Robert ! Hear what he does to Sir Robert, accordin' to Sir John Tyrrel, who was at Lynn. He says the member for S'rewsbury "tears off Sir Robert Peel's flesh, then polishes his bones, and sends 'em to the British Museum."

Nutts. Well, that's a nice compliment for a gen'l'man—bone-polisher to Sir Robert Peel ! But certainly Sir John Tyrrel is a good one at a compliment. Didn't he once say that the Duke of Wellington was the greatest man since our blessed Saviour ? He did, as I'm a sinner. And if Sir John is very red in the face, which he ought to be, it is because he hasn't done blushing ever since.





CHAPTER III.

NUTTS lathering a customer ; others waiting. Enter Little Girl.

NUTTS. Now, my little dear, what's for you ?

Girl. Please, Mr Nutts, my mother says you've sent the wrong front. This is a red un, and mother's is a light brown.

Nutts. Oh ! if she says it's red, I know it isn't hers. Now the lady as that belongs to calls it auburn. Not that I should like to walk with her into a powder-magazine with her wearing it.

Girl. And please, my mother says she hopes the curls are a little tighter than——

Nutts. Tighter ! You tell that blessed widow, your mother, that they're just what she wants—tight enough to hold a second husband. I know the man ; and though I've no grudge agin him, I curled 'em a-purpose.

Limpy. Why, isn't that Mrs Trodsam's little

girl? And the woman going to be married agin?

Nutts. In course. When her husband died she vowed she'd go into weeds and her own grey hairs for life. That's barely a twelvemonth ago; and now the weeds are gone, and she wears marigolds in her cap, to catch the milkman. I don't know who'd have a widder! Seven times have I curled that front in three weeks.

Slowgoe. (*With newspaper.*) Well, this is a pretty bus'ness, this Religious 'Pinions Bill. Going to make friends with the Pope! Going to let him send his bulls into the country, as many as he likes. Well, I don't know; but I should think the British Lion—if he's got a war life in him—won't stand that.

Tickle. That's nothin'. They say we're goin' to send a 'bassador to Rome, and Sir Randrews Agnew's to be 'pinted to the post. Oh, isn't the Pope a—a-gammin'us! He's a-goin' to buy down railroads right and left. Now what do you think the rails are for?

Slowgoe. Why, for steam-ingines.

Tickle. Not a bit on it. I know somebody as knows Colonel Sibthorpe's footman as knows all about it. The Pope intends to get up a fancy fair in Rome for the conversion of the Jews. Well, this will fill Rome with English dowagers, taking

all their pincushions ready-made with them. And when they get there, the rails (*they're made o' purpose*) will be taken up and turned into gridirons; and won't the Papishes roast us agin, as they did in Smithfield?

Slowgoe. No doubt on it. This comes of giving up good old names. I always thought what would come of it when we left off calling the Pope the Scarlet——

Nutts. Mr Slowgoe, allow me to say that my wife—Mrs Nutts—is only in the next room.

Slowgoe. When we left off calling the Pope an improper person in a scarlet garment. It's the growin' evil of the times, Mr Tickle, that we don't respect old names.

Tickle. We don't. And yet Colonel Sibthorpe says the Pope—that is, his Scarletness—is as scarlet as ever he was.

Slowgoe. It's a great comfort to see that the Colonel spoke against the bill; but it passed the second reading for all that.

Tickle. That's the worst of it, and just reminds me of what I saw last Sunday. There was a nice old animal eating his thistle upon a common—as nice a cretur as ever drew a cart. Well, the Kingston train came smoking, whizzing, rumbling along; when, suddenly, the animal left his thistle, and, stretching his legs to take firmer

hold of the ground, brayed and brayed at the train, as if he would bring the sky right down upon it; but, as you say of the bill, it passed for all that.

Tickle. You've heard of the Pertection Peers o' course? Heard what they've come to a resolution to do?

Slowgoe. No—what?

Tickle. Why, they've all met in the first-pair front of the *Morning Post*; and feelin' that the country is ruined, they've resolved like patryots, as they are, to do nothin'.

Noscbag. Shouldn't wonder if they succeed. It's a dreadful thing, though, for peers and lords, when they know a country's done up for ever, to be obliged to live in the ruins. I wonder they don't move.

Nutts. Bless you! they can't. The more rickety the country gets, the more they like it. Just as a woman loves her bandiest baby all the best. In their hearts they never was so fond of the British Lion as now, though Mr Tyler of the Zoological Gardens wouldn't give no price for him unless the Unicorn was thrown in with the bargain. Providence is very good to dukes and lords, for they do say this season grouse is perdigious plentiful.

Slowgoe. I'm glad on it. For it's my 'pinion that grouse and pheasants, and in fact all

sorts of game, was only sent into the world for superior people.

Nutts. Shouldn't wonder ; only it 's a pity they warn't somehow ticketed. 'Twould have hindered much squabblin'. Agin ; when Adam give their names to all the birds and beasts, he might have 'lotted 'em out into partic'lar folks that was to eat 'em—ven'son for lords, mutton for commons.

Tickle. Might ha' gone further than that, and have marked the very joints—sirlines for them as is respectable, and stickings for the poor.

Slowgoe. I tell you what, Mr Nutts, if you talk of Adam in that way, you don't shave me. I'll not trust my throat to an infidel.

Mrs Nutts. And that 's the way, Mr Nutts, you'll drive everybody from the shop. At this time of day, what's Adam to you ? Look after your own family—Adam did, I've no doubt.

Slowgoe. Talkin' o' the Pertectionists—I see they've had another dinner.

Nutts. Yes. The country's done for ; but it's a comfort to think that, though their hearts are broke, they can dine still. If an earthquake were to gulp England to-morrow, they'd manage to meet and dine somehow among the rubbish, just to celebrate the event.

Slowgoe. Dinner to the Marquis of Granby.

Nosebag. Ha! seen him at a good many public-houses in my time.

Slowgoe. Dinner at Walsham. Chairman something like a chairman; drank the Queen; and this is what I call real speaking (*reads*): "They must have observed *what benignant smiles* were upon her countenance and how she appreciated their loyalty. Her Consort, too, was in the fields of sport, and he *rode with courage and brilliancy* with the hounds till night closed the chase."

Nutts. I'm not intimate with his Royal Highness, but the paper always says he goes home to the castle to luncheon. And then to praise a gen'lewoman for smilin'! I s'pose they think that a compliment, as if it warn't at all easy for a queen to look pleasant. Again, if it's sich a recommendation to state affairs to be in the "fields of sport," I wonder they don't make a foxhound a prime minister!

Slowgoe. The Duke of Richmond says (*reads*), "I never had a fancy to ride upon the whirlwind and direct the storm."

Nutts. So far a very sensible old gentleman. A whirlwind isn't made for every man's hobby.

Slowgoe. And doesn't Mr Disreally give it to Manchester a little? Makes it a nothin'. Puts, as I may say, his crush hat over all the tall chimneys, and kivers 'em quite. He says, "Magna

Charta was not procured by Manchester; Manchester was not known then!"

Nutts. And is that really Benjamin? Well! And if only two years ago, at a Manchester sworry, if he didn't stand up in the 'Theneum, and butter the youths of Manchester as if they was so many muffins! And he talked to 'em too—I recollect it well—as familiarly about Jacob's ladder as if it had been placed in the Minories, and he'd been used to run right up it and slide down it from a boy.

Nightflit. Well, this is good news, isn't it? Here's Mr Jones has brought up a report to the Common Council of London; and we are to have a house, as he says—"the heart of St Giles'"—built for poor people.

Nutts. The heart of St Giles'! Well, it's the way to put a heart into it, anyhow.

Slowgoe. What, goin' to do away with all the cellars? Well, all I hope is this, I hope they're not goin' too fast.

Nightflit. How can they go too fast? when the report says (*reads*), "They propose to build a house, giving clean and wholesome lodging to one hundred single labourers, at a rent not greater than they are now forced to pay for accommodation in houses filled with dirt, vermin, unwholesome air, bad society, and many other evil circum-

stances." Can't get rid of dirt and varmint too soon, can we ?

Slowgoe. I won't be sure of that ; when people have been born and reared among 'em, dirt and varmin are as second natur.

Nutts. And aren't comfort and cleanliness ?

Slowgoe. It's all very well, but I'm the friend of order, I am. I only hope the Government won't find it out. Make poor people clean and spruce, and you don't know what they'll want next. All too fast, too fast.

Nutts. Well, I wonder you ever use your legs. I wonder you don't go upon all fours by choice, acause it's slower.

Slowgoe. Look here ; keep people in dirt accordin' to their station, and you'll keep 'em quiet. A man as lives in a cellar, or in a house, for the matter of that, with ten or twelve in a room, without any talk of water, and air, and gas, and such stuff as was never talked of in St Giles' afore—why, he never thinks o' nothin' but his drop o' wholesome gin. All he wants is, like a wild beast, some place to hide his head in for the night, that he may go to the public-house the next mornin'. Well, he goes ; and he gets his glass, and his glass ; and every glass seems to put new clothes on his back, and drop new shillings into his pocket, and all about him looks gold and purple—a sort of glory.

And though his wife is bone and skin, and kivered with rags; when he's comfortable drunk, she looks like any queen in a silver petticoat. And if his children with their thin chalk faces do make a hullabaloo for bread, why, when he's as drunk as he ought to be, they seem to him nothin' more than crying cherrybims.

Nutts. Well, but where's the man's heart all the while?

Slowgoe. Heart! Nonsense: doesn't feel no heart. If he takes gin enough, it's all gone; burnt up like a bit o' sponge in the burning spirits o' wine. Water, and gas, and air, and wholesome lodging! Why, isn't gin cheapest, when it makes a man do without 'em?

Nosebag. Not a bit on it. Gin never made a man respectable; now, water, air, and all that does.

Slowgoe. I've said I'm a friend to order——

Nutts. Order! Well, if ever they make a Order of the Pigsty—and there is, I believe, a Order of the Sheep-pen, or Fleece, or something of the sort—you ought to have it.

Slowgoe. Nonsense. 'Thusyism is puttin' the poor out o' their proper places. I'll just take the other tack. A poor man gets out of dirt and foul air, and all that. Gets raised in the scale, as the story of it goes. Why, there must be always somebody at the bottom of the steps, mustn't there?

Nutts. Why, yes. But then the steps themselves needn't be in muck, need they? Why shouldn't the lowest of us have plenty of sweet water, and God's sweet air, and all be raised together?

Slowgoe. 'Thusyism, as I say, is very well; but you know nothin' of political economy. Look here. A man gets used to all the Common Council talks about; to wholesome lodging, and all that. Well, he doesn't go to the gin-shop. Then, how, I ask you, is the revenoo to be kept up? Where's taxes to come from? I was only readin' it yesterday. It seems that the publican alone pays money enough to build all the ships, pay all the sailors, fit out all the sojers with their cannons and bayonets, and what not. Well, the man who's a good stiff drinker ought to feel pride in this. Every sojer he sees, every musket that's made, every ball-cartridge that goes into the warm bowels of an enemy, he helps with every blessed drop of gin he swallows, to pay for. Isn't it, or oughtn't it to be, a comfort to a man, if he hasn't a bit of liver left, to know that it's gone to help to load bullets, and sharpen swords, and pipeclay cross-belts? I say it: a man with no liver, his tongue like shoe-leather, his nose no better than a stale strawberry, and every limb on him shaking like leaves upon the aspling-tree, sich a man, thinkin' what the

publican pays through him, may still go into the Parks, and seeing the sojers on parade, take a pride in 'em.

Nutts. Well, and suppose the man is taken out of the muck that 's helped to make him drink? What then?

Slowgoe. What then? Why, then comes the danger to Government. The man doesn't go to the public-house. No: he gets used to a clean place and a clean shirt; and has light about him, and doesn't live like a two-legged bat, and has water enough to swim in. Well, he begins to read and to think, and to trouble his head about his vote, and all such stuff, that with the gin-glass at his mouth, he never dreamt on. Well, the end on it is, such will be the presumption of the poorer sort, when you take 'em from dirt and darkness, which, in my 'pinion, is their nat'ral elyment—such is their conceit, that I 'm blest if they soon won't talk of having a stake in the country!

Nosebag. Well, and every man as has muscles and bones, and is willing to work with 'em, has a stake, hasn't he?

Slowgoe. Where is it? You can't see it!

Nutts. Why, suppose his muscles and his bones helps to build a house for a man?

Slowgoe. Well, it's the man's stake it's built for, and not his'n that builds it. And that's perlitical

economy. But I was goin' to say when you put me out, that the Government doesn't know what it's after encouragin' cleanliness, and temperance, and such new-fangled stuff. It's all revolution in disguise. We've had gunpowder revolution, and moral revolutions; but they're nothing to what's coming, for they'll be the revolutions of water and soap. No government upon the 'versal earth can stand with everybody clean and sober. Do away with the swinish multitude, and I ask you, what becomes of the guinea-pigs o' society? Tell me that.

Noscbag. Why, we shall all be guinea-pigs together.

Slowgoe. Impossible! The likes o' you a guinea-pig! 'Tisn't in natur. All I ask is, where will you get your taxes? Last week at the great meetin' o' the waters, as I call it, at Common Garden Theatre—last week, I stood in Bow Street, and watched mobs o' people goin' in, all on 'em conspiring against the revenoo of the country. There wasn't one there, man or 'oman—and very pretty women some on 'em was, bloomin' like fresh flowers in fresh water—that wasn't a conspirator against the taxes that pays the sojers and the sailors, and the salaries in Woolwich Dockyard, and the Government never sent the p'lice to take 'em, but let 'em all sport away like the fountain in

Temple Gardens. Temperance and cleanliness! I've lived to see somethin'! I've heard of the age of iron, the age of gold, and the age of silver, and I should like to know what age we are to call this?

Nutts. Why, by your own account, the best of all on 'em—the Age of Soap and Water.

Slowgoe. (*With newspaper.*) This must have been a beautiful sight, gen'lemen, a beautiful sight, at Portsmouth. Quite makes a man's heart beat to read about it.

Nightflit. What's the perdicament?

Slowgoe. Quite a solemn thing. Field-Marshal Prince Albert has given a spick-and-span new set of flags to the 13th Foot, or what is called his own Light Infantry. The old ones had been so singed by fire, and torn to bits by bullets in Afghanistan, wheresomever that may be.

Nutts. Doesn't say who 'broidered the colours, does it?

Slowgoe. Not as I see.

Nutts. That's a pity. But I s'pose it was some o' the women. Fine ladies, as wouldn't so much as take up a stitch in a silk stocking acause they'd think it low and beneath 'em—fine ladies work at flags, and, I really do believe, like the work better than it it was their own baby-linen.

Limpy. How d' ye account for that, Mr Nutts?

Nutts. Why, you see, it's a part of the finery of sojering ; and that always takes the women. And so they'll stitch and stitch away at colours, and, for what I know, work their own precious locks of hair in 'em, acause they're to be carried by smart young gen'lemen covered with red and daubed with gold, and the drums and the fifes and the trumpets will play about 'em ; and they think that's glory, poor souls ! Silly creturs ! if they only thought of the blood, and groans, and mashed limbs, and burning houses, and trodden-down babies, and screeching women, suffering worse than death—if they only thought that their needle-work was to be waved and fluttered above such horrors as these, it's my 'pinion they'd as soon do sewing and stitching for Beelzebub.

Slowgoe. Don't be profane, Mr Nutts.

Nutts. Never was, Mr Slowgoe. But I will say it, I do think there's a devil sleeping in every trumpet ; and he wakes up and bellows out every time the brass is blown.

Nightflit. And the account goes on to say (*reads*), "The colours were consecrated by the Chaplain of the Forces."

Nutts. Never heard of one of the apostles with such a post—did you ? Consecrated ! I 'spose dipped in blood, and then fumigated with gunpowder.

Limpy. Is that the way, Mr Nutts?

Nutts. Can't tell for certain, as I never read the recipe in the New Testament.

Tickle. I once heard how it was done. The beadle o' St Giles' told me all about it. The colours are taken into the church, and the parson or the bishop, as it may be, who's to bless 'em, stays in the church, fasting all night with 'em, praying that every bullet as is fired off under 'em shall be directed by an angel; that every sword drawn beneath 'em, and cutting through the skull of a man, shall have the edge of it sharpened by Christian love; and that every bayonet thrust into the bowels of a man shall be pushed home with a blessing. And he prays that wherever them colours may wave, all the gunpowder may be kept dry under the wings of angels; and the firelocks be continually oiled by the tears of Christian spirits. After all, it must be a great comfort to a man—shot down, mangled, and mashed like a crushed frog—to turn his dying eyes to them colours and remember there's a parson's blessing on 'em. It must give him some pleasure to think of it when he's screeching for water, it may be, all night, and the moon with her cold, white, unpitying face looking down upon him. Consecrated colours! Well, if the flags are consecrated, in course they fire with sacred gunpowder and holy

bullets. And then the bombshells! They can't be s'posed to carry death and destruction when they drop; but, being blessed, must fall like manna in the streets and on the roofs of houses.

Slowgoe. None o' your sedition, Mr Tickle, none o' your sedition. Noble regiment the 13th Foot, and nobly rewarded! Why, it seems as long ago as 1776, when they were commanded by the Duke of Cumberland——

Nutts. What! Billy the Butcher, as they called him?

Slowgoe. As long ago as 1776 (*reads*), "as a mark of distinction for their gallant conduct, the sashes of the officers and sergeants were ordered to be tied on the *right* side instead of the *left*."

Nutts. The officers and sergeants only! Then the privates did nothing in the way of fighting? And what a mark of distinction, to be sure! Why didn't they at the same time order 'em to change the gaiters of the regiment, wearing the right on the left leg, and the left on the right; or to turn their hats the hind part afore, or their shirts inside out?

Slowgoe. And now the brave 13th, for fighting in India like any dragons, come in for more luck. For "her Majesty has been pleased to order the facings of the regiment from *yellow* to *blue*, and the regiment to be called Prince Albert's Regiment"!

Nutts. What a comfort—what a consolation for a man in a hailstorm of bullets—what a pleasure after marching and counter-marching, and living through the pains of fifty deaths,—to think that the yellow serge of his cuffs and collars shall be turned to blue! What a blessing to leave his children! Well, there's glory in colours, isn't there? Shouldn't wonder that when some regiment some day does some wonderful thing never heard of afore, if her Majesty isn't pleased to order that the same be dressed all over with harlequin patches. From yellow to blue! Well, that's a great change in life, isn't it?

Nightflit. Talking of soldiers, I see they haven't got Field-Marshal Duke of Wellington on the top of his arch yet.

Bleak. Why, no. They say in Parliament—I've jest been readin' on it—that they're goin' to wait till the people return to town, till they come back from raffling at the watering-places, and suchlike; and then when the statu's up they're to give their 'pinions.

Slowgoe. Ha! So I see. But won't it be a little difficult to get to the feelin' o' the public?

Tickle. Not at all. Yon Colonel Trench, who says the arch was made for the statue, and the statue for the arch, just as they say of two people afore they marry——

Nutts. Go on. Say what you like about marriage. My wife's out.

Tickle. Just as they say of folks afore they marry; who, when married, turn the worst match as can be. Colonel Trench is going to manage the whole matter. When all London comes back to town, and is gathered together under the arch, the Colonel will go round and toss for the Duke—the best two out of three—with every man, woman, and child upon the ground. The Colonel's taken odds that he'll win, and the Duke keep the arch.

Slowgoe. But I see they're going to try the effect with a sort of dummy, a Wooden Duke for the Iron one.

Nutts. Very disrespectful. Now I've a notion they might try it much better and cheaper. Why not hire one of the folks and a horse from Ashley's Amphitheatre? They might hoist the animal a-top of the arch, and there he might be mounted by the player as is used to him.

Nightflit. But the horse and the rider would only be the size of life. How could folks judge then?

Tickle. Why, very well. Let all the House of Commons go into the Park with telescopes magnifying four-horse power, and spying through them; why, in course they would see the 'fect, and no mistake.

Slowgoe. I see Lord John Russell's withdrawn the Irish Arms Bill.

Nutts. I said he would. That's the first Whig blunderbuss as is missed fire.

Tickle. Or rayther, the blunderbuss was so high charged, Lord John didn't like to pull the trigger. 'Fraid it would kick a little too strong, and crack the Cabinet like chaney.

Nutts. Talking about model dukes and dummy horses, isn't it a pity there isn't a sort o' model Parliament afore which the Whigs might try their bills? They find so many split when they come to prove 'em afore the real house. One night Lord John holds fast to his Arms Bill, like a child to a new drum; and the next he gives it up as if it was of no use, somebody having knocked a hole in it.

Tickle. Tell you it's the old Whig cowardice. They're so often afraid o' their own blunderbuss. Howsumever, this is a fault of the right sort, only hope they'll do no worse.

Nightflit. Any news about Young Ireland? What's he done with the "sword" that he took from 'Ciliation Hall?

Tickle. Why, they do say he's swallowed it, like the Injun juggler; only—not like him—they do say he'll never be allowed to bring it up agin. Old Daniel offers to take O'Brien back to his

busum if he'll promise never more to smell of gunpowder.

Nosebag. I've heard that O'Connell's going to write up in 'Ciliation Hall somethin' like what they print in the playbills.

Slowgoe. What's that?

Nosebag. Why, "Young Ireland in arms not admitted."

Nutts. And he *might* add, "No money returned."

Bleak. So I see Mr Hume's lost his motion for opening skittle-grounds on Sundays.

Slowgoe. Skittle-grounds—I thought 'twas to open the British Museum, the National Gallery, and suchlike.

Bleak. Well, it seems to be all the same, for Lord John Russell won't have it nohow. He says (*reading*), "As to the admission on Sundays to the British Museum and National Gallery, he thought it was better not to lay down any *positive rule*, or for that House to interfere by a resolution. There were some places where a single porter at the door would be sufficient as a protection. Such places he thought it was quite right to have open on the Sundays; but if they went further, he did not see why they might not ask to have the theatres open on a Sunday. Listening to a play of Shakespeare, it might be said, would divert

people from habits of drunkenness. Then as to opening such places as the Museum and National Gallery on Sundays, it would tend to deprive a great many persons of their only day of rest; and they could not well supply their places with others who were not in the daily habit of taking care of rooms." Well, for my part, it does seem to me that what holds good with "many persons" ought to hold good with a "single porter."

Nutts. Agin. Why don't they 'bolish steam-boats on the river; Sunday rail-travelling; Sunday coach and cab stands; Sunday tea-gardens? These things and places—all of 'em—deprive a great many persons of their only day of rest! So do Sunday public-houses. And then, as if taking care of the pictures at the National Gallery, that folks don't run their walking-sticks through 'em—and keeping a sharp eye upon the mummies at the Museum, for fear they should be run away with—was such delicate work that people must serve a 'prenticeship to learn it.

Tickle. And 'specially, too, when Mr Wakby said there was so many Jews who'd be delighted to take the post o' Sundays, and be 'specially delighted to take the money for it.



CHAPTER IV.

Enter PEABODY (*Policeman*).

NUTTS. Well, I'm glad somebody's come. Thought all the beards had gone out of town.

Just as you come, was thinking of shuttin' up shop and goin' myself. Never saw the Dials so dull, Mr Peabody. There isn't a back pair that isn't at a watering-place.

Slowgoe. (*With newspaper.*) Watering-place ! Pretty goings on there, I think. Here's a letter taken from the *Times*, when the gentleman as writes says, "Ramsgate's shocking. Ladies bathing with no more thought than if they was mermaids ; and chairs let out at a penny a piece, for an enlightened public to sit—as if they was in the opera stalls—to look at 'em."

Nutts. Bless my soul ! Where did you say ?

Slowgoe. At Ramsgate.

Nutts. You may go on. Mrs Nutts is at Margate.

Slowgoe. And the gen'leman says in his letter that the young ladies dance polkas and waltzes in their bathing-gowns; and dance and scream the more for the people looking at 'em.

Peabody. Where's the police?

Slowgoe. That's what the gen'leman asks. Where's the police to put 'em down? Where's the police to warn 'em back to the machines?

Tickle. Why not have a coast-guard with indy-rubber uniforms, to run into the water, and take the ladies up, and make an example of the ring-leaders?

Nutts. I don't know how it is, I've often thought of it; but somehow—I've observed the circumstance to Mrs Nutts—somehow the female mind seems to gain courage at watering-places. A young thing that won't raise a eyelid in London, will meet you like the full moon at the seaside.

Tickle. Well, I've often thought of that too. Somehow or other the sea air does harden 'em. Now, Mr Peabody, you who was a schoolmaster afore you was a policeman, can you, who knows everything—can you explain it?

Peabody. Why, the female mind is naturally susceptible——

Nutts. That's what Mrs Nutts said, when on one occasion she *would* have a pint of peas at five shillings.

Peabody. And sympathises with external nature. The female mind, too, often confined to the limits of a slop-basin, feels itself grow and expand in presence of the universal deep. A woman who may be no better than a doll in London, shall be a first-rate philosopher at Broadstairs.

Nutts. Humph! Like young ducks; don't know all their strength till they take to the water.

Peabody. But it all goes off with the season.

Nutts. I'm glad of that. Mrs Nutts, as you know, is a woman of strong mind; nevertheless, she must come back to the slop-basin.

Slowgoe. So I see *that* Cobden has been in France. Wanting to stir up a free trade in frogs, I s'pose. But they're not such fools; they won't give up perfecting their native produce like us. He says in his speech to the Frenchmen, "I am not a propagandist." Now what does he mean by that?

Peabody. Why, that he doesn't want to preach free trade to the French.

Tickle. But the best on it is, he can't help it. Mr Nutts and I was talking about that afore, warn't we, Nutts.

Nutts. The very fact, says I, of Cobden being received as he is by Frenchmen, makes him a propagandist. There he is, with every syllable he says, preaching free trade for the wine-growers,

though he doesn't say a word about it. There he is in the city of Paris ten thousand times bigger conq'rор than Marshal Blucher. Lor' bless you! the soldiers, poor fellows! never thought of it; but Cobden will prove the worst English general for them. He's opened the campaign that will knock up their trade. There wasn't a French soldier, whilst Cobden was talking and the Frenchmen were cheering, that oughtn't to have felt his musket crumbling away in his arms like dust, and his bayonet melting like in its scabbard. There wasn't a single French cannon, if it had had any sense at all, that oughtn't to have groaned as with the belly-ache, knowing that, as condemned old iron, it would go to the melting-pot. Then for the Gallic cock—the cock of glory!—the cock that, unlike any decent barndoor fowl, is always for picking out the eyes of nations—the cock that only lives upon a morning feed of bullets—why, after Cobden had made his speech, the poor thing felt his appetite get weaker and weaker for the garbage of glory, and in the end, depend on't, he'll live upon corn, without a drop o' blood mixed in it, like a decent respectable bird, and never think of cock-a-doodle-dooing above all his neighbours.

Nightflit. Shouldn't wonder. Why, doesn't the French paper itself—the *Journal des—des—*

Peabody. The *Journal des Débats*—the Government organ.

Nightflit. Doesn't it, here, in what it says about Cobden, talk as if it was ashamed of the business of the customhouse officers rumpling and tousling everybody as steps into the country, for smuggled goods? Turning people upside down, and shaking 'em like so many pickpockets.

Nutts. Don't talk of it. Shall I ever forget when Mrs Nutts and me crossed to Calais to see France? Shall I ever forget how fellows in blue uniforms, with swords by their sides, searched us over and over, as if we'd brought a cutler's shop and a cotton-mill in every one of our pockets? Isn't it dreadful to think that men should be such fools to themselves as to pay soldiers and customhouse officers to prevent one country bringing its blessings to another, as if heaven only intended the best iron for England, and the best claret wines for France? Well, isn't it a comfortable thing to think of, that Mr Cobden has spoken the dying speech of all them customhouse officers? They mayn't believe it just yet, but it's sure to come. They've got consumption in 'em, and sooner or later they must go. Only I *do* hope that on both sides they'll save one or two specimens for their museums, just to show the children that come arter us what fools their fathers was afore 'em.

Slowgoe. Well, there's one comfort left for me, I shan't live to see it. You're for universal peace, and all that sort of stuff. Very well in story-books, but never was intended. War and all *that* was meant from the first. War runs through our natur. Everything wars upon everything. There's nothing so little as doesn't eat up something as is smaller than itself. Look here now; here's a paragraph from an Injy paper, the *Agra Chronicle*, about the battle-field in the Sutlej. It says: "We came *viâ* Loodianah and Firozepore, and on our way encamped on the fields of Alrival and Feroze-shah. Alrival was a beautiful green plain, the only one I saw between Meerut and this, *and scemed intended by nature for a battle-field*. A few skeletons were strewed over it, and of the wells one was just drinkable, and the other was so impregnated with gunpowder as to be wholly unfit for use."

Tickle. I can't have that. • "Intended by nature for a battle-field." And do you think when natur made this beautiful world, and filled it with fruits and flowers, and sent down blessed light upon it—made it, as I may say, a paradise for folks to live in—do you for a moment think that natur made certain "beautiful green plains" for slaughter-houses? You might as well say that when natur made iron, she made it not for carpenters' tools, but a-purpose for swords and bayonets; and that

the sea would have all been fresh water only that we wanted the salt for gunpowder. That's the shabby part of man. Whenever he does wickedness upon a large scale, he always lays it upon natur. If Cain had been a general, he'd have put all his bloodshed upon natur.

Nosebag. Then never mind natur; let's talk of the Court. So the Queen's agoin' to have another palace. Isn't it an odd thing that kings and queens in our country never do get properly suited with houses? All their palaces—like their clothes—seem misfits when they leave 'em to them who comes after 'm. There was George the Fourth, he could no more live in his old father's palace than he could get into his coat; so he had Buckingham Palace built, with a fine archway that always looks jest whitewashed. And now that's so little that the present Royal Family fill it all up, like a cucumber in a bottle. And so we're to have another building.

Slowgoe. Never mind that. It won't cost a farthing. For doesn't Sir F. Trench say in his motion—here it is—"That while this House feels confident that Parliament would willingly supply any reasonable amount of expense for the attainment of so desirable an object, it has great pleasure in expressing its belief, that *by proper management* of the means at the disposal of her

Majesty and her Government (in aid of the £150,000 voted for alterations at Buckingham Palace), this great and desirable national object may be obtained without *adding one shilling* to the burthens of the people." What do you think of that? Not one shilling, says Sir Frederick.

Nosebag. Bless you! in the matter of money, who'd trust to bricks and mortar? But we'll say the palace is built without a shilling from the people—we'll say it's built. How about the furniture? Why, afore the thing's well up, the Minister will come down to the House and ask for about half a million of money to buy rolling-pins and tinder-boxes.

Slowgoe. But he won't get it.

Tickle. Won't he? Every farden on it; while all the House, and the Speaker into the bargain, will weep with pleasure while they put their hands in their pockets.

Slowgoe. And what will Mr Hume be about?

Tickle. He'll oppose it, o' course; and so will Mr Wakley and Mr Williams. And what o' that? Why, the Minister will draw himself up upon his toes, and, looking as tragic as if they'd killed his dearest relations, ask the honourable members if they know what they're opposin'. Put it to 'em as men, whether her Majesty ever before asked a single farden for rolling-pins—whether above all

sovereigns that ever went afore her—or that 'll come after her—she hasn't been most scrupulous, most ekonomick in the article of tinder-boxes? He will ask what surrounding nations will think of us—higgling about rolling-pins—disputing on royal tinder-boxes; and then the House will get up, and hurray—and, as I say, weeping tears of gratitude, vote the money, as though with all their hearts and our pockets they wished it twice as much.

Slowgoe. Ha! you're a cuss-of-liberty man, you are, Mr Tickle, and don't know what befits the royal prerogative. They won't want a shilling, sir—not a shilling. There's the Pavilion at Brighton. I understand that the loyal people of that loyal town, out of love, and affection, and veneration for their monarch as a king, a man, a husband, a father, and—let me see—yes, a practical moralist, intend to purchase the Pavilion, and let it off in shops for jewellers, wig-makers, and tailors, and all as a monument to the memory of that great and good man George the Fourth.

Tickle. Well, to make the monument complete, I hope they won't forget a wine and brandy vaults.

Nutts. But how about the Duke's statue? I thought it was to be put up upon the gate, that the Queen might see it when she drove out. Now, if the Queen has a new house on Buckbeen Hill——

Tickle. Why, all the houses 'tween that and

Rutland Gate will be pulled down, that the statue may be brought near to the new palace with a telescope.

Slowgoe. I'm very happy to see that her Majesty, and the Prince, and the children are taking such pleasure on the sea.

Tickle. Yes. Parson M'Neile—he isn't yet a bishop, I hear——

Nutts. Why, no; but as they say there's going to be a bishop made for Manchester, and as he's at Liverpool, so very near the spot, he keeps himself prepared for the best. They do say he sleeps with his carpet-bag and shovel-hat by his bedside, all in readiness for an early train.

Tickle. A very provident parson. Well, they say he preached another sermon last Sunday about the Prince and his doings. In fact, it is reported that he intends to follow up his Royal Highness through the *Court Circular*. Last Sunday he compared him to Noah.

Nutts. As how?

Tickle. Why, because his Royal Highness was afloat in the royal yacht. Bless you! he showed how the Prince was Noah, and how the *Victoria and Albert* was nothing more than the ark, holding the hopes of the world; and how the precious children were Ham, Shem, and Japheth, and how the ark held two of every living thing.

Tickle. Well, I can't say about that ; but if Parson M'Neile told men all the beasts in the ark was, St Jude's could answer for one of the "creeping things."





CHAPTER V.

TICKLE. (*With newspaper.*) Well, it's a shocking thing, isn't it, when we read of babbies, left by things as call themselves their mothers, on highways and door-steps, and in all sort of places, exposed, I b'lieve they call it, to the elements and the severity of the season. It's a little bad o' such parents, isn't it, Mr Nutts?

Mr Nutts. Bad! that isn't the word, Mr Tickle; and the worst of it is, we can't make a word bad enough for it.

Tickle. To put a sweet little child—a innocent little gal, for instance—in a box, or a basket, or what not, and leave her in the wide world, for the wolves that walk about it. As I say, it is a little bad; and it's very proper, when the mother as does it is found out, that she's sent to prison, and made to pick oakum; and try to learn feelings from the gaol clergyman. It's a shockin' matter

this, to think of a little gal so left—a poor little soul, as innocent as the daisies.

Mrs Nutts. Is it so very shockin' ? Then read it.

Tickle. What I mean is taken out of the *Times*, and is all about the Queen of Spain's marriage with her cousin. Here it is :—

“Don Francisco de Assis was summoned at Madrid, and for the reasons as stated to you at the time, refused to come. He was again summoned, though there was no decision taken, as the feeling of dislike to his person was as strong as before, and rendered his chances, even then, of a very trifling nature. That dislike was strongly and deeply felt by the young Queen herself, and participated in by her mother ; it was *with tears in her eyes, and her bosom heaving with sobs*, that she *was forced to plight her troth to him*. She had to be told that—I use the expression employed—‘if she did not instantly consent to marry her cousin, Don Francisco de Assis, she should marry no one.’ When I again assure you that the feeling of dislike, amounting to repugnance, was shared in by the Queen-mother, it is not difficult to guess from what quarter this force proceeded to compel a child, not yet sixteen years old, to consent to marry a man from whom she recoiled with loathing.”

A nice beginning, that, of the marriage state.

Nutts. There, Mrs Nutts, aren't you happy that

you was born in Seven Dials, and have a husband who you love, as shaves for a penny? Don't you bless yourself that you aren't the Queen of Spain?

Mrs Nutts. It's all shockin' enough; but it isn't what Mr Tickle begun talking about. His story was about a little gal as was left in a basket in the wide world, with nothin' but chance to look after her.

Tickle. I know that; but isn't that little gal, with her bit o' wretched flannin, in her miserable bit o' basket, with the midnight wind singing about her, at last picked up by letter Q, No. 45, policeman, and carried to the workhouse—isn't that little gal, with the taste of its mother's milk not yet out of its mouth, a happier soul than the poor little wretch, born in a Spanish palace, wrapt in velvet, and fed with a golden spoon? Now, take the two babbies. Here's Betsy of Bermondsey, we'll say, and Isabella o' Spain. Betsy was taken up in a wicker basket, at the door of a very respectable tanner, a man as had served as churchwarden a dozen times, and not being owned by nobody, was packed off to the workhouse. She's called Betsy, after one of the misses as does her the first compliment she ever had in life, by consentin' to do her that honour. Well, Betsy grows up a strong, flourishing workhouse thing, a bit of parish duckweed, and does credit to her keeper.

She is thumped and bumped, but between whiles somehow learns to write and read and keep accounts, as far as two and two make half-a-dozen. Well, at ten years old she's sent out as parish 'prentice, to look after the five children of Mrs Chip, the bonnet-builder, as has too much to do in her own bus'ness to attend to her own family. And she's the maid-of-all-work, without the wages, up early and abed late; for as Mr Chip is a first-rate bagatelle-player, he doesn't sometimes come home till two, and Mrs Chip will have the kittle bilin' at six. Howsumever, Bessy gets on in life, as a football gets on by all sorts o' kicks and knocks, and at last she's out of her 'prenticeship, and sets up housemaid on her own account. She's a independent young 'oman, with eight pounds a year besides tea and sugar, and nobody knows how many caps, and how many yards o' cherry-coloured riband in her deal box.

Mrs Nutts. What nonsense you talk, Mr Tickle! No woman has so many yards of riband of one colour. It only shows what a little you know of the human 'art.

Nutts. My dear Mrs Nutts, talking about the human heart, is the pie made?

Mrs Nutts. Mr Nutts, just attend to your beards, and leave the pies to me.

Nutts. (*Aside to SLOWGOE, who points.*) A

woman of very strong mind. Go on, Mr Tickle. You left the gal with the caps and the riband.

Tickle. Well, Betsy Bermondsey has all sorts of sweethearts; and the *Morning Post* never troubles what head it has about the matter. Whether she marries the butcher, the baker, the milkman, or the policeman (as has a partic'lar weakness o' the stomach for roast duck and inions), not one of the young Englanders in the *Post*, or any other paper, cares the vally of its own leaders.

Mrs Nutts. What's leaders made of, Mr Tickle?

Tickle. Made o' different things. Sometimes o' steel-filings, sometimes o' soap-and-water. But, as I say, Betsy Bermondsey has sweethearts; and the different parishes about her don't send their church-wardens, some to speak for the butcher; some for the baker; some for the milkman; some for the police; and some for a cobbler that she'd never seen in all her days; and what's worse, some from the cats'-meat man that she never looked at without shivering. No, Betsy gives away her heart, and is all the lighter and rosier for the gift. And she marries the baker, and in as quick a time as possible she's in a little shop, with three precious babbies, selling penny rolls, and almost making 'em twopennies by the good natur she throws about 'em.

Nutts. What do you say to that, Mrs Nutts?

Mrs Nutts. Well, I should say Betsy were a happy woman. Every poor soul hasn't her luck.

Tickle. You may say that. For only think of Isabella, Queen of Spain. Poor little merino lamb! With half-a-dozen 'bassadors prowling about her, and licking their lips, like tigers about a sheep-pen, to snatch her up—and at last it's done. At last she's laid hold of, and her very heart's torn out of her, that she may be made a wife of a —.

Noscbag. It makes a man's blood bile to think of it.

Tickle. And acause she's a queen she's to be turned into a horrid slave for life, and the link of the chain that holds her is to be a wedding-ring. Now, when some foreign prince's grandmother's aunt's husband's sister's son or daughter dies, all the Courts go into mourning for three or four days or hours, I forget which, to show to this world and the next their respect for the calamity. Now it's my opinion, if there was any real truth in Court mourning, that all the royal folks in Christendom ought to put on sackcloth, with a good sprinkling of the best Wallsend ashes, when Queen Isabella marries her cousin. Charming matrimony, when one of the parties, and that one the poor woman

too, as the *Times* says, recoils from the other "with loathing."

Mrs Nutts. Don't talk of it, Mr Tickle, it's more than my head can bear.

Slowgoe. All very fine and very sentimental; but what's to become of state affairs, if kings and queens think of their hearts? Hearts warn't made for 'em. Royal folks have always married in one way, and therefore always must. It's quite right there should have been all this dodging about Isabella's husband.

Nutts. Well, I haven't said anything about the matter as yet; but after all, what a deal we men, as rational criturs of the universe—lords of the earth—angels in our worldly apprenticeship, as we think ourselves, have to brag about, when it's made a matter of consequence to millions of rational souls *who* a little gal of sixteen marries—whether one man or another!

Slowgoe. None of your atheism, Mr Nutts; or, as I've told you a hundred times, you shan't shave me. Politics is a mysterious thing.

Nutts. You're right. So is picking pockets. Now honesty, as the old spelling-books say, is adapted to the meanest understanding.

Nightflit. Very rum letters, these, from the Earl of Ripon and his parson! All, I see, taken from the *Standard*.

Nutts. What—about the Earl, the donkey, and the curate? I must say the Earl doesn't shine quite like a new fourpenny in the business.

Slowgoe. Nonsense! give me the paper. What does his Lordship—mind I'm not a Whig, so no admirer of his'n—what does his Lordship say to Mr Crowther, who's made the curate of Nocton, that Lord Bentinck made all the row about? The Earl, looking upon the curate as a livery servant—only the livery's a surplice, and not drab with mustard facings—desires him and his wife not to have no dealings with a Mr and Mrs Newton, simply because the Earl doesn't like 'em. The Earl says: "Lord Ripon is confident that if they were aware of the course pursued by Mrs Newton towards the Dean of Windsor, Mr Granville and Mr Kempe (the two previous curates of Dunston), as well as to Lord Ripon himself, they would not receive any apparent civilities from Mrs Newton, or have any communication with her. Lord Ripon has written to Mr Howse to desire that Mr Crowther *may have the use of the pony*, and Mrs Crowther *of the donkey OR covered cart*, whenever he applies to him for them." Think of that. Isn't it condescension? What I call Christian kindness? To lend a pony to a parson, and an ass with a covered cart to the parson's wife. What would revolutionists have?

Nutts. Very right. The donkey is a touching

bit. The loan of it shows in what respect the Earl held the clergyman. There's something what I call magnanimous in that jackass.

Slowgoe. Again listen to this : " If Mr Crowther has need of anything being done for him in any way, it is to *Mr Howse* alone to whom Lord Ripon would wish him to apply. Lord Ripon is confident Mr Crowther will meet with every attention from Mr Howse."

Nutts. And who is Mr Howse? A near and dear relation to Earl Ripon?

Slowgoe. No : Mr Howse is Earl Ripon's cook ; and therefore, as knowing best his Lordship's heart through his stomach, could best talk to Mr Crowther. And now think of the ingratitude of this parson. He won't give the cold shoulder to Mr and Mrs Newton in return for the pony and donkey, but says : " The duties of this situation dictate to me great impartiality, and that I should think no evil, but as much as in me lieth, live peaceably with all men. In the humble hope of accomplishing this course, it must be my care to avoid even the appearance of partisanship in any unhappy differences of the parishioners." Don't you call *that* flying in the face of a nobleman?

Nutts. Yes ; and capital flying too.

Slowgoe. Like your revolutionist ways. But his Lordship knows what belongs to the true dignity

of a nobleman. He won't let Mr Crowther wind up his watch by Nocton Hall. That's sweet revenge. For the parson writes: "I was in the habit of regulating my watch by the clock in the tower of Nocton Hall, and every Saturday evening went up to the Hall for that purpose, having learnt that it was by that time the inhabitants of the two villages regulated theirs. On Saturday evening the policeman on the grounds came up to me and said 'he was very sorry to be compelled to act so to a gentleman, but he had been directed to warn me off the grounds, and of course he must obey his orders.'" Now isn't that spirit on the part of his Lordship? Won't let the clergyman set his watch by Nocton clock. Won't the parson be sorry for that?

Nutts. I can't say; but all I know is this, if his Lordship's clock goes at all like his manners to his curates, it's the last timepiece I should like to wind myself up by, anyhow.





CHAPTER VI.

NUTTS. Now, Mr Bleak, I b'lieve the shave's with you. (*BLEAK takes the chair.*) Mustn't complain; but dreadful weather this for business. Not a soul in town. Had nothing to do but improve my mind all the week. Now, folks who pay rent and taxes can't afford that. Everybody still at the seaside.

Slowgoc. Humph! For my part I can't think where the 'noxial gales are gone to: they *ought* to blow people back to London by this time. But nothing is as it was.

Tickle. Rum thing this at Margate. And quite a warning to young women.

Mrs Nutts. What's that, Mr Tickle?

Tickle. Young lady of most respectable family—father in the Excise—turned to a mermaid.

Mrs Nutts. Nonsense! it can't be. What for?

Tickle. Because she would dance the polka close

inshore, and make so many people write to the *Times*. Now she's punished; now she's enough o' bathing. Now she does nothing but sing songs, comb her hair, and stare at herself in a looking-glass.

Nutts. Well, for a young woman that can be no punishment.

Mrs Nutts. Mr Nutts, you're a fool. (*Retires.*)

Nutts. As you're all family men, gentlemen, you understand that. And yet I never could make it out why the tenderest of wives have the greatest knack of calling their husbands fools.

Tickle. Bless you! it's only too much love speaking out. Just as a saucepan, when too hot, boils over.

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) Great season for the vineyards. It seems there never was such a promise for champagne. Glorious news this for the poor. In course nobody here understands it; but according to perlitical economy, when champagne's plentiful it must bring down ginger-beer.

Nutts. Well, all I know is, pine-apples haven't cheapened potatoes.

Slowgoe. Don't talk of potatoes in that heathen way, Mr Nutts; if you'd any decency, any religion, you wouldn't talk of a potato with a smile. I suppose you haven't seen what Lord George Bentinck—

that's a pious soul, that is—says upon potatoes? I thought not. Here it is. His Lordship as *will* be Prime Minister—it's at Mr Newdegate's dinner—his Lordship says (*reads*): “They would recollect that at the close of the last year there was *a sham cry got up*, respecting the failure in the potato crop, *to serve the purpose of an administration*; he was now sorry to say that that feint had become a reality; that the potato failure had spread from one end of the kingdom to the other—from the Land's End to John o' Groats, throughout the whole of Ireland, and throughout the whole of the countries bordering upon the Atlantic. (Hear.) He was fain to confess, and *he did so with sorrow, that this time there was no sham*, but he *greatly feared* that this sad reality *was the just vengeance of Providence for the great ingratitude we had displayed in needlessly complaining of His bounty*.” And all the people cried “Hear, hear,” and with the wind in their faces, no doubt, looked very believing, very solemn. So you see, 'cording to Lord George, it's Peel, and nobody but Peel, as has brought the potato rot upon us. Peel cried “Wolf” to pass the corn-laws; and now for his wickedness, and his alone, the wild beast is really come—has been sent, as dear Lord George says, by Providence, to tear the bowels of hundreds o' thousands of innocent people; and, moreover——

Nutts. Don't—don't go on in that way, or I must lay down the razor. Well, I hope I'm a religious man—I haven't cut you, Mr Bleak, I trust?—and I love a bit o' politics, nobody better; but if I shouldn't blush redder than that blacking-bill, to think for a minute of making Providence Whig or Tory, and counting the angels on my side of the question; whether it was for all the world as they count a majority in the House of Commons. If there is a presumption that shows what an impudent worm upon two legs a man is—and I don't care a button whether the worm is a worm with stars and ribands, or a worm with no more nobility of flesh in him than a worm in a pauper burial-ground—if there is a presumption in this world, it is, I say, when a man will take religion into partnership with him, and whatever he may do, make himself and his little dirty doings the special pets of Providence. And yet, I dare-say, Lord George thinks this the Christianity for gentlemen! Well, there's no knowing what use a man may make of his religion. Hearing what I have heard, I won't swear that a member of the Jockey Club mayn't bind his betting-book up with his Bible.

Slowgoe. I've often threatened it, Mr Nutts; but if you go on in this infidel manner, I must take my chin to another shop.

Nutts. Why, look here : truth isn't like a penny-piece with two different sides to it ; and a flum is not less a flum for coming after dinner. Either Lord George meant what he said, or he didn't. Now, if he meant it, he meant to make Sir Robert Peel answerable for what he calls "the vengeance of Providence ;" he meant to lay at Sir Robert's door the misery and starvation—and it makes one's heart sick and one's blood cold to think of it—of thousands and thousands of suffering creaturs ; he meant——

Slowgoe. Nonsense ! you're such a violent man : he meant nothing of the sort. When a man bids for Minister, everything's fair : public men——

Tickle. Oh yes ; men blacken one another as they like, they means nothing. They do it, I s'pose, just as last Tuesday we blackened Bill Simpson's face when he was asleep—for a joke, and nothing more.

Nutts. Ha ! and his Lordship having dined, I s'pose you'll have it, there was a greater allowance for burnt cork ? Don't tell me. They take up poor fortin-tellers—hocus-pocus fellows that cast nativities and suchlike, and tell servant-gals what every star means when it winks upon 'em. But when a lord—and a lord, too, that would be a prime minister—would trade upon Providence, and, thinking he knows all its doings, would lay the

misery of millions upon the head of one man, they never send for the constable, oh no; but fine gentlemen, full of piousness and port wine, stamp their feet and whobble out "Hear! hear!" Such religion's like olives to 'em, and gives quite a relish to their drink.

Slowgoe. I say again, you're a violent man, Mr Nutts. There is no doubt that the potato disease is brought about by something; and until that something is discovered, we—I mean us of true Conservative principles—may as well lay it upon the treason of Sir Robert Peel as upon anything else. When the true cause is found out, why, then, as gentlemen, we can shift it.

Nightflit. Here's a bit from the *Dublin Record* that says it's Popery as has brought about the blight. It's nothing but giving money to Maynooth that's ruined the 'taters.

Tickle. No doubt on it. In the same way that when sheep die of the rot, it's only because there's the Pope's eye in every leg of mutton. Now as for Lord George——

Nutts. Don't talk about him. Poor fellow! Now I'm a little cool, although he's a lord and I'm only a penny barber, I do from the very bottom of my heart pity him! Anything pleasant in the paper?

Noscbag. Lord Wrothesley's going to make

second-class carriages pop'lar on King Hudson's lines, and won't pay his Majesty's first fares. A good move this. For if lords would only ride with the sheep and bullocks, there's lots of people who'd directly think sheep and bullocks the best of company. Howsomever, in this matter his Lordship's right. But King Hudson has made a long speech at the York and Newcastle meeting, and, like all kings, cracking his own generosity to the skies; and then he began abusing the *Times*, but somehow his heart failed him; and the Iron King talked as if his tongue was suddenly turned to butter, and every bit of metal was drawn out of him.

Tickle. (With paper.) Have you heard this? *(Reads.)* "Mr Wakby, M.P., has received several letters from ladies, many of them of rank and title, offering to co-operate in purchasing the discharge of Cork, Mathewson, and any other witnesses examined at the inquest." And this is taken from the *Morning Post*.

Nutts. Oh, it's all right; the women will see the true beauty of soldiering at last. Poor things! At present they think man never so pretty as when in uniform; never so complete a thing to love as when he smells of gunpowder. And beauty smiles on soldiering, and soldiering toasts beauty; and that's how for hundreds of years

they've diddled one another. But it says something when ladies club their pounds to take the finery off men's backs, and the swords from their hands, and turn them from parade heroes into peaceful nobodies. Once Mrs Nutts used to dote upon a drum; and now—though she hates the law, like a woman, ever since I was served with a writ—now she thinks a drum the wickedest of parchment.

Slowgoe. Glorious news! The Duke's going up at last. He'll be on Rutland Gate in a day or two, the—the "envy of surrounding nations, and the—the"—I forget the rest, but there he'll be.

Tickle. It must be a great relief to him to have it over. Let a man be as great as he may, and as iron as he may, he must feel in a bit of a pucker to have his bronze lightness so talked and writ about. They do say that for the last month the Duke's suffered nothing but nightmare: every night thinking in his sleep that Mr Cubitt was hoisting up, now one of his legs to the arch, now one of his arms, and now his head. It must be a great comfort to him when he's up altogether.

Nutts. The thing will look ugly enough, no doubt—a disgrace to the metropolis, as the newspapers say, and all that; but for my part, and after a proper consideration of my power of holding out, even if the statue when up never comes

down again—I—I speak timidly, to be sure, as a penny barber ought—but I don't think I shall sink under it.

Nightflit. A pleasant marriage this for the French Duke as is going to have the Infant of Spain.

Nutts. Humph! it reminds me of the old story of the eagle and the child, only instead of the eagle it's that old Gallic cock Louis Philippe. How he'll pounce upon the little wench, and carry her off to his nest in Paris, there to make the most of her! Quite a case of child-stealing, only, you see, there's no police-van—no Newgate for kings.





CHAPTER VII.

LIMPY. (*With newspaper.*) It isn't a bad notion of Mr O'Connell's, nohow.

Tickle. I haven't read it; but I can guess what it is. Seein' the state Ireland's in, he's buttoned up his pockets and taken another vow.

Nutts. I know; a vow to turn every day into eight-and-forty hours, and work every minute of 'em for Ireland.

Tickle. No; it's a newer vow than that, for that vow's a week old. It's a vow that his pockets, so long as the folk are starving—shall fast too. That they shan't know the taste of rent—not so much as the copper taste of a farthing—till the peasantry have every day a bellyful. He's buttoned up his pocket with that vow; and he'll defy a troop of horse with drawn swords to open it again.

Limpy. Nothin' o' the sort. Quite another notion. Mr O'Connell's too modest a man to say

anything about his own pockets : no, the hon. gentleman, as they say in the Commons, knows his place, and confines himself to the pockets of other people ; and here in his letter to " dear Mr Ray " he says, " How delighted I should be to be able with any prospect of success, to propose that the gentry in each locality in Ireland *should appoint a delegation* of their number to meet together in Dublin without delay, in order to organise the best plans for obtaining Government and local relief during the impending calamities of famine and pestilence, and to embody in practical form their suggestions to Parliament for laws suited to the emergency." Now isn't this the liberal thing ? To give such advice as this, to bring all the cream of the gentry together ?

Nutts. It might be called the Parliament of Famine. A tremendous gathering, to be sure ! And if only all the landlords as live away, taking their change out of Ireland, would for once be brought together in Dublin, wouldn't it be an awful meeting ? To only consider what many of such members would for the time represent ! There's a good many of 'em the best of men, to be sure ; but again, supposin' it, as I say, to be a Parliament of Famine, wouldn't there be the hon. member for Filth and Rags, the hon. member for the Houseless, the hon. member for the Fevered and Naked, the

hon. member for Despair, the hon. member for Midnight Housebreaking, and the hon. member for Midday Murder ?

Slowgoe. What mad stuff are you preaching, Mr Nutts ?

Nutts. Nothin' mad, Mr Slowgoe, but every word of it terrible meaning—dreadful sense. Do you mean to say that if you got such a meetin' as Mr O'Connell speaks of, you wouldn't have in the people coming together, the representatives, as it were, of all the miseries that make the wretchedness and the crimes I talk about ? What do we call the English Parliament ? Why, the wisdom of England. All the sense of the country skimmed and strained.

Tickle. But you never believe it.

Nutts. Never mind that. Now, in the delegation of Mr O'Connell, we should have all the sufferings, and horrors, and crimes of Ireland represented, as I may say—brought naked before the world. And then if these gentry could be got together, and specially the absent gentry, the graceless babes that suck Ireland's breasts, and never look upon Ireland's starving face—if all these could meet—"meet together in Dublin"—and be made by a miracle to do what Ireland wants, how we should find hon. members change their constituencies ! The member for Filth and Rags would be ashamed of what he represented, and resolve to

stand for Cleanliness and Clothing ; and Houseless, and Nakedness, and Despair, and Burglary, and Murder, would all of 'em, as I may say, be disfranchised—wiped off the national schedule—and Comfort and Health, and Peace and Plenty, and Security, all of 'em for once send their Irish members to Parliament.

Tickle. Very odd this talk about Ireland, and quite makes out a dream I had last night. I thought the Queen drove up in a special train to London, and went down to Parliament with all her cream-coloured horses, and with two golden keys, and the crown on her head, insisted upon opening both the Houses herself. And then she took her seat upon the throne and read her speech, and I thought it wasn't her Majesty I heard, but a silver trumpet ; and I thought she talked about the distresses in such a way that everybody wept, and even Lord Brougham wiped his eyes with a roll of parchment ; and her Majesty said that the time was come for everybody to make a sacrifice—yes, sacrifice was the word—for the folks in Ireland. And then I thought I heard another flourish of trumpets, and I saw the Queen-Dowager come in with a large bag of money marked £50,000. And with the surliest look in the world she went up to the Lord Chancellor, and gave him the bag, telling him that she, a lone woman, had £100,000 a year out

of the taxes; she was only too happy to give up half for as long a time as Parliament should think fit, and the country should want it. And then there was such a cheer, and I thought I saw the Queen-Dowager go floating out of the House upon a purple cloud, and looking so happy that she looked thirty years younger for it——

Slowgoe. Only shows what your waking thoughts must be, to have an infamous dream like that. In the good old times they wouldn't have let you dream in that manner—not a bit on it. Yea, if things only was as they was, you'd have Mister Attorney-General with a '*x-officio*'bout your ears for that dream.

Tickle. Well, hear me out. When the Queen-Dowager went, I thought all the bishops ran with money-bags to the table.

Slowgoe. (Rising.) I won't hear another word. If you'll dream anything that's possible, I don't mind listening to you; but no such balderdash as that.

Nutts. Talking about bishops, it seems that Manchester has a good chance now. There'll be a mitre, after all, among the tall chimneys.

Tickle. Wonder if they'll smoke the less for it.

Slowgoe. Hope the roof's safe, Mr Tickle; but you do talk a little like an atheist. If Manchester

is really to have a bishop, I do hope they'll send an early train to Liverpool for the Rev. Hugh McNeile. Why, here's a letter from the *Albion*, a Liverpool paper—a letter written by a "Churchman" about his Reverence, who's going to be removed, it seems; whereupon the writer says, "But how will the cause be served by his removal from St Jude's to St Paul's? What the one gains the other loses. And what is the reason of this removal? The only one I have ever yet heard advanced on the subject is, *that he has preached himself threadbare* (in his ideas, I mean) where he now is, and wants to start with it all new again for another congregation."

Nutts. Very odd he should leave because his ideas are threadbare. Why can't he turn 'em and go on again? Others have.

Nosebag. Well, this is a good 'un. It's an account of the Leger running, taken from the *Morning Post* of Wednesday, about the horse "Sir Tatton Sykes" and his jockey Bill Scott. "The appearance of Sir Tatton Sykes infused fresh hopes into the minds of those who had not seen him since Epsom, while the quiet earnestness of 'Bill's' manner assured them that the advice given him at Epsom had not been thrown away upon him, and that he was fully impressed with the importance of the charge committed to him. *Singular to say,* HIS

CONSTANT GUARDIAN *was a clergyman of the Established Church. A jockey under such guidance could hardly fail behaving himself.*"

Nutts. Should like to know the name of the clergyman. Odd, isn't it, that the black coat should match over the blacklegs? The 'Stablished Church will get a lift, eh? if every jockey's to have his chaplain. As there's a talk of making more bishops, if Lord George comes in, shouldn't wonder if we've a Bishop of Tattersall's; jist to ordain young clergymen for all the race-courses. Don't see too, if clergymen are to be constant guardians of jockeys, why they shouldn't have a pulpit set up for 'em on the grand stand. Well, after this I shan't be surprised to hear hymns sung at a dog-fight.

Slowgoe. I see nothing to sneer at, nothing whatever. If Mr Scott is fond of a glass, who better than a clergyman could be, as the words go, his constant guardian? But it's like you levellers. If you can't have good done after your own way, you'd rather it shouldn't be done at all.

Nutts. Good done! Why, it's right that a horse shouldn't be hocussed, certainly; but for that reason should a clergyman of the Established Church sleep with the beast in the stable? It's right that dice shouldn't be loaded or cards marked; but would it be right that a clergyman should see fair play in every gaming-house?

If parsons are to wait upon jockeys, what's to prevent 'em—if their patrons require it—what's to prevent 'em turning bottle-holders to prize-fighters?

Slowgoc. So I see Mr Newton's writ to Lord Ripon to know what his Lordship means by setting on his attorney to sneer at him, and of course his Lordship won't answer him; he knows the dignity of a nobleman better.

Nutts. To be sure; that's what's called the privilege of the peerage: to pelt a common man with mud, and then silently wonder at his impudence when he complains of the dirt.

Bleak. Here's great news, glorious news! (*Reading.*) "It is said that the Duke of Marlborough intends shortly to take up his permanent residence at Blenheim Palace."—*Oxford Chronicle.*

Noscbag. Well, that's somethin' to comfort us for the 'tato blight. When the newspapers is ringin' with all sorts of horrors, it is a real bit of pleasure to come upon a piece of news like that. I wonder that the papers that tell us when dukes and lords change their houses, don't also tell us when they change their coats.

Nutts. Very true. After this fashion: "We are delighted to inform our enlightened public that the Marquis of Londonderry appeared yesterday in a bran-new patent paletot. He will wear it for

the next fortnight, and then return to his usual blue for the season."

Bleak. Here's another bit. (*Reads.*) "Viscount" —well, never mind the name—"Viscount — has gone on a visit to his noble relatives, where the Viscountess is expected to join his Lordship at the expiration of her duties as lady-in-waiting to the Queen."

Noscbag. I never could make that out, how ladies, with husbands and families, could go and be ladies'-maids and chambermaids even to a queen.

Nutts. Easily accounted for, bless you! It's all their humbleness. They go to know what service really is, that they may be all the kinder and gentler to their own ladies'-maids and chambermaids at home.

Slowgoe. So the Spanish match is going on.

Nutts. And real match it will be too, with brimstone at both ends.

Slowgoe. I see the Duke Montpensier leaves Paris on the 27th, his baggage-waggon's gone before him.

Nutts. Wonder what artillery he'll take, for there never was a marriage that will smell so much of gunpowder. Daresay they'll marry him in a hollow square of soldiers, with charged bayonets; and, moreover, that he'll have a suit of armour under

his marriage clothes, and cannon with lighted fusees at the church door.

Tickle. The Spanish Parliament, I see, has addressed the Queen, and wished her joy. And the Queen says (*reads*), "I receive with profound emotion the felicitations which you address to me on the occasion of my marriage with my august cousin, and that of my dear sister with the noble (*esclarcido*) Duke de Montpensier. I have not only consulted *my own domestic happiness*, but also the welfare and prosperity of the nation."

Nutts. (*After a long whistle.*) I wonder what would come of state affairs, if it wasn't for the lying that holds 'em together! Why, lies to some governments seem like mortar to houses of bricks; couldn't, it seems, stand at all without 'em. Consulted her own domestic happiness! poor soul! Consulted her parrot, perhaps.

Tickle. That's a nice old gentleman, Louis Philippe, isn't he? Well, my blood as a Briton does bile a little to think that he has, so to speak, gammoned our gracious Sovereign, after all his embracing and kissing her at *Yow*,* and at Windsor Castle, and I don't know where; and all the time, when he know'd that he meant to jockey us, and marry his son to that precious Infant. I do repeat it, my blood biles——

* Eu.

Nutts. It was shabby, certainly, and like a king. Nevertheless, think as I will upon the matter, my blood's as mild as mutton broth. To be sure, I do think the little gal had better have married a Spaniard, 'specially as there's a prince or two in the family. And if there hadn't been a prince, at all events she ought to have married a countryman.

Slowgoc. What! marry a princess to a husband with no royal blood! Do you know the consequence? What would you think if the eagle was to marry the dove?

Nutts. Why, I certainly shouldn't think much of the eggs.





CHAPTER VIII.

NUTTS: (*Laying down newspaper and taking up razor.*) It's a great blessing it's all over, and no signs yet of a revolution. Wonderful, isn't it? Come, Mr Limpy, here's a razor that 'ud take off the beard of a thistle. (*LIMPY sits.*) Wonderful, isn't it, what a deal o' bad taste, as it's called, Englishmen will stand, and quietly sleep upon, after all? Didn't folks prophesy a riot at only the notion of putting the Wellington Idol—as I'm bold to call it—upon the top of the arch, and what's the end of it? There's Mrs Nutts, my wife, had made her mind up to a revolution, made her mind up to it as if it was a new gown, and no woman was ever more disappointed.

Mrs Nutts. Well, I'm nothin' to Mrs Biggleswade opposite. She expected nothin' but the people a-fightin' with the soldiers; and so moved her chest o' drawers agin the door, and her feather bed

behind the shop windows, to stop the bullets and cannon-balls. Now, whatever my feelings was, bating filling my bottle with hartshorn, I took no other trouble.

Nutts. And there's one comfort; wherever there's a woman, hartshorn's sure not to be wasted.

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) A magnificent ceremony! What I call a holiday for a whole people.

Tickle. Quite a holiday for all the statues anyhow. Not one of 'em, I'm told, but felt it so. They say Queen Anne at St Paul's, shook her petticoats and stood an inch higher. George the Third in Corkspur Street, raised himself in his stirrups. George the Fourth in Trafalgar Square, stroked up the bustus of his wig. And the Duke of York, perched on that very high pillar, out of the way of the sheriff, for once left off thinking of his debts as quite beneath him, and looked like a gentleman in easy circumstances.

Slowgoe. I don't believe a word of it. Statues do this? 'Tisn't likely. What for?

Tickle. What for? Jest as married people—ask your pardon, Mrs Nutts—grin the most at a wedding, 'cause other folks have got into a scrape as well as themselves.

Nutts. Have you heard how the waxwork at Madame Tussaud's took it?

Tickle. Better than was expected. In course

the Iron Duke will be a great opposition, a great pull agin 'em for two or three weeks; but as November comes in, and the shine's taken out of his Grace, the waxwork has hope that folks will come back to somethin' like natur agin.

Nutts. You saw all the show, I b'lieve, Mr Tickle?

Tickle. Pretty well, only——

Enter CANNIKIN, a drayman.

Well, isn't this droll? Here's the very man as is one of Mr Goding's, the brewer's, gen'lemen, as assisted at the ceremony.

Cannikin. Jest did, then. Great day for the brewery. Not a 'oss that drawed the Duke as isn't twenty pound the better for it. Fetch it at the 'ammer.

Tickle. No doubt. More than that if advertised: "Warranted to carry twenty stone; quiet in harness; and never shied at the Duke of Wellington."

Cannikin. And didn't the 'osses—the whole team on 'em—look a credit to their grains? All on 'em—with laurel in their heads?

Nutts. Considering where they come from, wouldn't hops have been properer? Well, and when the people saw the statue, how did they take it?

Cannikin. They opened their mouths, and hoo-raed as if they would ha' swallowed it. If instead o'

bright brass it had been made o' gilt gingerbread, and the mob had been schoolboys, they couldn't ha' shouted and smacked their lips more.

Tickle. Well, I don't wonder—it did somehow look good to eat. It hadn't so much a goolden as a custard look about it; seemed to my eye as if it had been smeared with yolk o' eggs. But go on; tell Nutts, Mr Cannikin.

Cannikin. When we'd got the Dook well on the dray, off we went—the 'osses mindin' it no more than if they'd drawn dooks, instead of beer, all their life. Off we went—and very grand it was. Yet, somehow, when I looked at the cocked-hat—for I'd never seen a cocked-hat in brass afore—I knew it was wrong, but I couldn't help thinking o' the Fifth of November. And then the brass cock's feathers in the hat—didn't they rattle a bit?

Nutts. Rattle! What, was they loose?

Nosebag. What they'd call in the playhouse, property feathers—made o' hammered metal. For my part, I should ha' thought they'd been cast solid.

Tickle. Bless you! Mr Wyatt knows what he's about. He made 'em to rattle in the wind a-purpose to frighten the birds, and preserve the Duke's face, otherwise it was feared the swallows might build their nests under his Grace's eyebrows.

Slowgoe. Impossible! they wouldn't dare to do it.

Tickle. Why not? Must be plenty o' room; for they do say fourteen gentlemen took a sociable glass in the Duke's inside.

Slowgoe. Pooh! What for?

Nosebag. I s'pose to show, as I once heard *Othello* say, that the Duke "had stomach for 'em all."

Slowgoe. Never was—never will be—so great a man. Proceed. The dray-horses—noble animals!—went on——

Cannikin. And when they turned Park Lane—and how they *did* turn! as if they know'd the whole business quite as well as we Christians—and got into Pickydilly, and the statue—as I thought to myself—begun to smile, tho' p'r'aps it was only the sun as broke out upon it—as the Dook seemed to know he was gettin' near home—then didn't the people shout agin, and didn't the band blow their brass trumpets, and didn't the Dook's brass feathers rattle agin? Oh, didn't they!

Slowgoe. Quite affecting to hear of it. And I'm told the Duke's balcony was full o' nobility.

Tickle. Bless you! full as the Red Book. There was the Queen-Dowager, and a good many o' the rest o' the Royal Family.

Nutts. (*In a low voice, aside.*) Worshipping the graven image.

Tickle. But, bless your heart! you should ha' seen Sir Frederick Trench and the Duke o' Rutland

upon Mr Wyatt's stand. Didn't they laugh at the statue—and rub their hands—and wink at one another—and put their tongues in their cheeks, as much as to say to the mountain o' brass afore 'em, "Well, it's all right; we've got you so far, and we'll have you up: and when you're well up, there you'll stand; for we know a 'lightened people won't trouble their heads a pin about the matter to pull you down agin." And that's the way they sarve the British Public!

Slowgoe. Sarve it right. What does the public know—what does the press, as it's called, know in comparison with a committee of noblemen? Talk about taste. Nobility comes into the world with it; it's only the sham sort that comes to the other people. The voice of the press, indeed! what is it, at best, but bow-wow?

Tickle. That's what the Statue Committee think it. And they do say, just to show what they care for it, that afore the Duke's head was soldered on, they put copies of the *Times* and the *Chronicle*—as writ agin it—in the Duke's inside.

Nosebag. With a spicy cut of Leech's from *Punch*, jest to keep the cold from the Duke's stomach. Well, it will be a bad thing for some time for the playhouses. Mr Webster—I always sticks his bills for him, like a gen'leman as he is—has got a new farce at the 'Aymarket. I don't care

how droll it is—but it must feel the 'fect of the Duke's cocked-hat. Painful to think of, isn't it, to one who sticks the legitimate drayma—painful to think of, how, whether dead or alive, the nobility is agin the English stage!

Slowgoe. This talk about the drama, and such rubbish, Mr Nutts, it's enough to drive every respectable person from the shop.

Nutts. Well, it is bad. But we must allow for early edication. Mr Nosebag was, we may say, brought up on paste, and so talks like a billsticker. And the Duke's up, after all! Nevertheless, it's my 'pinion, it had never been if a soul had been in town. Folks at the watering-places, and folks abroad—in France, and in Germany, and in Swisserland——

Slowgoe. I pity 'em, poor wretches! out o' London on such a day! Every absent Englishman as thinks on it, ought to go into a shirt o' cinders-and-water. But go on, sir (*to Cannikin*), tell us the rest o' the ceremony.

Cannikin. Oh, it was all hoorain'—nothing but hoorain'.

Nutts. Well, altogether, I'm disappointed. As the people was for the time in such high spirits, and took the thing so kindly, I don't think they went far enough. Seein' what a idol they've made o' the thing—sticking it up agin common sense—and,

by the way, the sufferings of common sense under them as is got the upper hand, there's nobody can tell—seein' what a idol they've made of it, the Committee might ha' gone further, and made the show, as I may say, complete.

Slowgoe. What do you mean, Mr Nutts? To my poor thinking, the ceremony seems to have been magnificent—perfect!

Nutts. Not half. See what they do in Indy. Don't the folks, when they bring *their* dray, the dray of Juggernaut—don't they go and throw themselves right down, as if upon a feather bed, right down under its wheels?

Slowgoe. Mr Nutts! You don't dare to insinuate that free-born Britons, men that never stoop to nothin', should have cast themselves——

Nutts. What?—right down under the wheels of the Wellington Idol? Why, no; not quite. That would ha' been a little too serious. But when we hear some folks talk as they do about the statue, and about the Duke, as if he was the first man born, and would certainly be the last—when these folks are for settin' up brass and bronze to the glory of gunpowder, and never heeding the glory of the goose-quill, or——

Nosebag. Ha! there's Shakespeare, and——

Slowgoe. Now, none of your low company, Mr Nosebag: I won't have it. Go on, Mr

Nutts ; you was speaking of the admirers of the Duke.

Nutts. No, I warn't. I was speaking of the 'dolars. I like admiration ; but I hate 'dolatry of any man. I can hear the word Waterloo, and not go down upon my knees to it. Well, I shouldn't ha' liked these folks to ha' gone under the wheels, theirselves ; but since last Tuesday was Michaelmas-day, a good many on 'em might ha' found very proper proxies.

Nosebag. They might have drew a flock of the birds under, to be sure.

Nutts. In course. And it would have been so in keeping, wouldn't it ? Crushing the goose-quills under the iron wheels of war ! Now I think of it, that 's not a bad notion. Eh ?

Slowgoe. (*Jumping up.*) Good-morning, Mr Nutts. Never again do I enter your shop. A man who can speak thus of a statue of all we love, a man who can talk in such an infidel way of Waterloo, and—but, good-morning !—I think I 've had a lucky escape, seeing how often I 've been shaved by an atheist. (*Exit.*)

Nosebag. See what it is, Nutts, to have principles. A customer gone for life !

Nutts. Not a bit on it. He only wanted to go off, like a squib, with a bang—and he thinks he's done it. Didn't like the touch of the geese ; thought

it a little too hard upon himself, perhaps. Now, what do you say to my notion, Mr Peabody? You ought to know—you've been a schoolmaster.

Peabody. Before I entered the police, I had that melancholy honour. Certainly there is something in your notion of the geese that might be improved. Michaelmas-day might be made still more memorable by a yearly sacrifice, after the old Pagan manner, at the Hyde Park arch, under the statue. Recollecting classical instances—and on my beat at night, it is now and then a comfort to me to rub up my rusty Latin; indeed, I sometimes catch myself crying, "*I præ sequor*," instead of "Move on, I'll be after you"—well, as I say, recollecting classical instances, there might every Michaelmas be performed at Hyde Park, in honour and memory of the Statue Committee, the Great Goose Sacrifice.

Nutts. It sounds promising: go on. How—in your classical manner—would you manage it?

Peabody. Why, I propose to have an equal number—that is, a goose for every committee-man, whose name, for the nonce, the goose should bear. And the goose should have fillets of sage about its head, and a rope of onions circled about its neck and body; and its throat should be cut to the tune of the "British Grenadiers," played on the brassiest band to be had; and it should be drawn, and

stuffed and roasted, and its savoury, smoking body be divided amongst the populace.

Nutts. And so with every committee-man—that is, so with every goose ?

Peabody. So with every goose. And so should the glory of the Committee endure to all time, and the names of a Rutland and a Trench be odorous in the land !





CHAPTER IX.

NUTTS. (*Opening door for child carrying hare in a dish.*) Now, Adelgitha, you'll tell

Dobbs the baker to be very partic'lar with that hare. 'Tisn't pleasant to send meat to the oven, and have back a cinder. (*Exit child.*)

Nosebag. Specially arter the trouble of gettin' a hare. Hares aren't wired every day.

Nutts. Wired, Mr Nosebag? No sich thing. That hare died happy, knowing it died according to Act of Parliament : goin' to eat him with currant-jelly, and all the honours.

Enter SLOWGOE.

What, Mr Slowgoe ! Well, at first if I didn't think it was a he-goat. 'Can't afford it — can't, indeed ; if you will go with your beard for a fortnight, I can't lose by it. No ; that must be two-

penn'orth ; not a farthin' less. Soap and razor can't do it.

Slowgoe. Never again, Mr Nutts, am I shaved by an infidel. Never again should I have come into your shop, only, I—I think I left my 'bacco-stopper.

Nutts. Never thought you smoked ; but I do. (*Calling.*) Mrs Nutts, you haven't seen Mr Slowgoe's 'bacco-stopper ?—a little boot o' virgin gold with a diamond heel-top. If the child's swallowed it, put the poor man out of his misery, and say so.

Mrs Nutts. (*From the back.*) Mind your business, Nutts ; and go along with your rubbish.

Nutts. (*In a low voice.*) That's like the women, isn't it, Mr Slowgoe ? All our little pleasures in which they take no part is rubbish. What do they care for 'bacco-stoppers ? Not a jot : nothin' below a broken heart's worth their notice. You won't take a stool, Mr Slowgoe ?

Slowgoe. Just while I wait. The thing will be found ; for Mrs Nutts is a charming woman, and——

Nutts. Mr Slowgoe, excuse me ; I never say anything o' the sort myself, and can suffer no other man to take that freedom. (*Calling.*) Mrs Nutts—partner of my bosom—apple of my eye—don't forget the currant-jelly. You see, gentlemen,

when it's a matter of dinner, a little kindness is allowable. Exalt man as you will, still he's a thing of stomach.

Nosebag. Stomach! I only wish Mr Slowgoe had seen that hare. Poached, Mr Slowgoe, poached, as I'm a sinful billsticker. If Mr Peabody here had done his duty as a policeman, he'd ha' taken that hare to Bow Street.

Slowgoe. Ha! it's no business of mine, of course—I'll take the paper after you, Mr Nosebag, just while I stay—no business; but I know'd what it would come to when they disgraced pheasants down to poultry, and sold hares with low rabbits.

Tickle. Nothin' 's surprising now; I shouldn't wonder to see the British Lion sold for bull-beef, and the Unicorn himself turned into ewe-mutton. Wonder what Mr Grantley Berkeley would say, if he heard that a penny barber dined off hare and currant-jelly!

Slowgoe. Why, he'd write another letter to the *Morning Post*, of course. Great man Mr Berkeley! We've got a Keeper of the Woods and Forests, why shouldn't we have a Government officer, a Keeper of the Hares and Pheasants?

Pcabody. With a seat in the Cabinet?

Slowgoe. And a right to raise a body of men, to be called "Punchers on the Head"—punching

everybody as ever looked at anything above a weasel or a sparrow? But I always said it: once sell game—once let the lower orders taste it, and, like tigers that once eat men, they're too conceited to eat anything under it.

Nosebag. Talking about Grantley Berkeley—here's a letter from him, that says he's had warning from Lord Fitzhardinge not to think any more of his seat for the "Western Division of the County of Gloucester"!

Nutts. I see. An order to take off his Lordship's livery and look out for another place. That's how they discharge valets, and footmen, and——

Tickle. Independent members of Parliament!

Slowgoe. I can't stop a minute; but this is interesting: just one look at the paper. (*Takes it.*) Ha! I see: a very long letter.

Tickle. Yes; by what I can make out, it goes more for length than depth.

Slowgoe. I've no doubt—whatever it is—it's quite right. (*Reads.*) "I have a letter bearing date the 31st August 1846, in which Lord Fitzhardinge for the first time informs me that *he shall discontinue the support* he had for so many years given to my representation of the county. You will, I am sure, pardon me for not touching on all *the wild passages* of that angry letter, and permit me to bring under your notice the

only strictly public accusation it contains. In the sincerest sorrow, I assure you, that were I in the present instance to deem it worth my while to allude to other objectionable portions of that remarkable communication, I could do myself justice in refutation of them, without touching with *a ten-fold deeper tint* certain and mischievously ruling or *predominant shadows*, that unhappily are already too well known as *imperiously existing* in the quarter from whence the aspersion comes." "Shadows imperiously existing!" That's fine writing, that is! Real pen-and-ink work!

Nutts. But why should the servant be discharged? What has the unhappy man done that he should be commanded to strip himself of the coat of the family—to take off his plush—to undo the Fitzhardinge gold-band from his hat—and leave Parliament in a plain suit?

Slowgoe. Why, he's accused of "abusing Government patronage."

Tickle. Well, that isn't much—there's so many to keep him in countenance. But what's he done? 'Pointed himself to be Master of the Royal Poultry-yard?

Slowgoe. A mere nothing. All he's done, poor fellow! is this. He got a cadetship from Government for a youth some years ago, and he's just asked for another. Now, what's in that, I

should like to know? And yet on the 15th September, Lord Fitzhardinge—but here's the resolution (*reads*): "A meeting of some of the influential supporters of the Liberal interest of the Western Division of Gloucestershire having taken place at Gloucester on the 15th September 1846, and a statement having been made by Earl Fitzhardinge *as to his future intentions with regard to the representation* of the Division, it was unanimously decided to support, in every possible way, *the views and intentions of Lord Fitzhardinge* as detailed to-day, and as a necessary consequence to deprecate every attempt which may be made to foil the Liberal interest in this Division." And this is signed by a batch of the independent electors.

Nutts. Poor fellow! And what does Grantley say to that?

Slowgoe. Doesn't like it at all—and doesn't mean to put up with it. He says (*reads*): "On the field of politics, I stand *precisely on the spot* whereon *he* (Lord Fitzhardinge) *placed me*; I am so far and no further, *by his immediate desire*, and with his personal concurrence; and at present it is fair to presume that in his unexplained desertion of me, he either contemplates a retrograde movement, or he means to jump beyond me, leave me at a spot to which my obedience to his wishes

led me, and to join the Free Traders to the widest extent of their wishes. At all events, by every law of courtesy and justice, he ought to give me *the option of taking either step by his side.*"

Nutts. Well, there's a good deal of truth in that. If I was able to keep a footman, and he wasn't to brush my clothes, or clean the plate, or to bring Mrs Nutts' lapdog into the room in a manner I liked, I think I should first say to him, "Is that the way, Jeames, you take the dirt off my trousers? is that the style you have your forks in? is that the manner to lift a pug or a spaniel bitch (as the case might be) worth forty pounds—is that the way to do it?" I should say at first that he might try again, and not, no, not at once without a warning word, discharge him, but give him, as the unfortunate Mr Berkeley says, "the option" of trying his hand again. But so it is. Whether in a House of Commons, or a house of call for tailors, people have no pity on their servants.

Slowgoe. But Mr Berkeley intends to call a meeting in November next; for, speaking of the county, he says (*reads*): "I am ready to sacrifice myself, *as I have long done*, for her *real interests*, but not to an unworthy conspiracy, if one exists. I am in no way inclined to commit a *political suicide*, or to allow my public life to die by the

hand of undiscovered assassination." That's noble—and like a sportsman!

Nutts. Poor gentleman! And he has long sacrificed himself—and nobody's known it! Just as I've read of folks carrying iron spikes about their waists, when people have thought they wore nothing harder than fleecy hosiery. What a shame there shouldn't be a House of Commons' "Book of Martyrs"! Then we should know our real sufferers.

Peabody. And a Berkeley go down to posterity with "a punch on the head" (I wonder how *he* likes it?) from his noble relation—for all the world as old Fox sends down *his* martyrs—in a copper-plate picture.

Nutts. No notion, I suppose, of the next independent member for the equally independent voters of Western Gloucester? Not known yet who's to wear the gold-band, the plush, and the family facings?

Tickle. That's in the bosom of the Most Noble Lord Fitzhardinge! He'll do what's right, I daresay.

Peabody. But isn't there a law against peers of England dirtying their precious white hands with making—just as children make dirt-pies—members of Parliament?

Nutts. To be sure. But peers never do make

'em ; they only say, Let 'em be made ; and their journeymen see to that. A good deal of it's quite the same as doll-making ; and there's dolls in my house that open their eyes and shut 'em—and speak to notes that go for “no” and “yes”—and with these dolls I make all the profit I can. Only there's this difference : the dolls never pretend to be anything but dolls ; they are faithful to their wires, and when they speak, they never for a moment try to say—that very difficult word for a doll of any sort—“Independent.”

Tickle. Talking about dolls, I see they've married them little girls in Spain. Mr Lewis Philips has got another daughter.

Nosebag. Seem to have made quite a ballet-dance of it. Seem to have danced the princes from town to town—as if the holy state of wedlock was to lead to nothing better than a jig. When the princes got to Tolosa (*reads*), “a lively and original symphony announced the approach of the dancers ; at the head of these marched a choir of little boys, arrayed in white dresses, all bespangled with gold, with diadems on their heads, and guitars or lutes in their hands. Then advanced, in double line, the male and female dancers—the latter in blue and white dresses, the former in white pantaloons and pink waistcoats.”

Nutts. I see : the little boys “with diadems on

their heads" is a capital touch; and means the lot of little princes that's to be born in Paris, to be ready for the Spanish throne.

Slowgoe. And what does this mean? I mean this about "the fireworks"?

Nutts. The fireworks means the war that's to be lighted for the glory of France, when the King of the French is in the busum of his partic'lar saint, and, gone from this world, has left to it the benefit of bullets, bayonets, and saltpetre, besides the new diskiveries that's to beat Warner, and to blow up Maltar and Gibraltar by way of experiment like.

Slowgoe. Well, he's married all his sons now—that's a comfort.

Nutts. Not a bit on it; for hasn't he got relays of grandchildren? Now I don't want this to be known all over the Dials, but the fact is, at this very moment—I have the news from a Moor that sweeps the crossing in Broad Street—at this moment he's sent to Mr Besson, his journeyman lucifer-match maker, to go off at once to Morocco, and ask the Emperor to let any one of his hundred little daughters marry the Count of Paris, and to keep all the benefit of her gold-dust and di'monds, and the M'ometan religion. And, moreover, his Majesty promises to build a mosque for the young lady in the 'Lysian Fields, I believe they call 'em,

with a mufty on the top of it, to call her every morning to prayers.

Slowgoe. Humph! we must mind what we're arter in the Mediterranean. Not that I think the Emperor of Morocco will consent to the matter; in which case Louis Philippe——

Nutts. Doesn't care a pin; acause he then intends to apply for a daughter to Mr Abdel Kader. And when the Count of Paris has married her, his little brother is to have a wife from Ireland.

Slowgoe. Why, there's no princesses there!

Nutts. Isn't there? Louis Philippe knows better than that. So he's sent over to invite any of the five hundred gentlemen with daughters, all undeniably come from Irish kings; and when he's picked out a bride, he'll marry his grandson to the child, and in her right take possession o' the Emerald Isle! Queen Victoria doesn't know it; but never was a young woman robbed by a nice-looking old gentleman in any omnibus as she's been rifled by Louis Philippe.





CHAPTER X.

NUTTS. (*Stropping razor.*) Can't think what's come to my razor. Won't cut nohow.

Slowgoe. I've often told you, Mr Nutts, nothing is as it was. The world's gettin' old; and the iron, which we may look upon as the bones of the world, is going first. But what was to be expected from so many railroads? The earth's exhausted, sir, by the presumption of man. I've been readin' all about it, and I should say, as a man of business, the world isn't worth fifty years' purchase.

Nutts. Like my wife—looks very well for age, for all that.

Mrs Nutts. (*From parlour.*) Better let your wife alone, Mr Nutts, and provide for your family.

Nutts. But if, Mr Slowgoe, we aren't to get any more iron, what are we to do for swords and armour in the next Spanish war? You know as the

happy couple's married—the Prince and the Infant lady, I mean—who can say how soon the fighting may begin?

Slowgoe. (*Very solemnly.*) Nobody!

Nutts. Artful work, isn't it, when a little petticoat like that stirs up a war, sets armies in motion and ships a-sailing, and fortifies batteries, and cuts down, and blows up, and brings, as I may say, Beelzebub himself upon the world, like an old showman, to play the pipes and beat the drum whilst the fun's a-doing? I wonder, in the course o' time, how many thousand will be cut and blown to bits, and all along of the Infanta's marriage. Well, they may talk as they like, but the real gun-cotton's in petticoats.

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) I perceive that the Queen of Spain has ennobled the French Ambassador's baby. Not weaned yet, and made a grandee of Spain!

Tickle. And not the worst of the lot for that, I daresay.

Mrs Nutts. Make a darling baby a grandee, Mr Slowgoe. Dear child! what good will that do it? better have given it a silver mug.

Tickle. Only just hear, Mrs Nutts, and——

Nutts. I think, Mrs Nutts, you'd better look to your pudding, and never listen about babies.

Mrs Nutts. Not listen about babies! Well, I'm

sure—dear creturs!—we're troubled enough with 'em. Never mind Nutts, Mr Tickle—he never deserved the babies he's got.

Nutts. No ! but how rewards do rain upon some men ! Well, make haste ; read all about the baby, Tickle, or—well, it is odd—but you never can even start a baby without bringing a woman about with you.

Tickle. Very proper, too. You see, Mrs Nutts, the 'Bassador's baby is made Duke of Santa Isabel. He hasn't done sucking his thumb yet ; but he's a duke, for all that. Made a duke because his father got the Infanta made a wife—a wife at fourteen, Mrs Nutts !

Mrs Nutts. At fourteen ! Well, where do they expect to go to ? And the baby's a grandee ?

Tickle. Of the first water ; and as such—I've read it all afore and will tell it you short—as such, he can't have a single day out from Spain without the Queen's leave ! And then, agin, he can't marry—can't give his heart away, as you did, Mrs Nutts——

Mrs Nutts. There ! no rubbish !—go on with the child.

Tickle. Baby can't give away his heart and get married, if the Queen doesn't like the young 'oman.

Mrs Nutts. Little sufferer !

Tickle. But now comes the honour and glory.

Baby may keep his hat on in the presence of the Sov'ran of Spain !

Peabody. And his head, too? Because 'tisin't always so certain.

Tickle. And further; baby has the right, in honour of the Sov'ran, at any of the royal bull-fights, to rush in among the bulls, taking any of 'em by the horns he likes——

Mrs Nutts. Poor little innocent !

Tickle. Or taking his chance o' luck as it comes. In fact, doing as the boys do with the pie-man—risking a toss for it. And that's what it is to be a grandee of Spain, Mrs Nutts !

Mrs Nutts. Well, I thank my stars none o' my precious babes are that. They are not called upon to wear their hats and show their ill-manners afore their lawful Queen; they are not called upon to——

Nutts. No; and they're not called upon to eat up the apples and sugar, but they're doing it. (*Mrs Nutts rushes to back parlour: squalling heard.*) Best children in the world: I know 'em; they won't cry above half an hour. Tell me where did they ring the married couples?

Nosebag. At the Church of A-toucher.

Peabody. Atocha, my good sir. The Virgin of Atocha is the saint of all the Queens of Spain.

Nutts. Ecod, she must have had her hands full in her time! Queen Christina, I don't know how it

is—I never saw the lady, don't think I ever shall—but, somehow, I never read or hear about her that I don't think of that beautiful female panther that Mr Tyler's got in the 'Logical Gardens.

Slowgoe. There you are agin. Flinging at kings and queens! If you *will* go on being an infidel, I *must* leave the shop. How can a she-panther be like a Queen of Spain?

Nutts. Not a bit, if you come to reason on it; and yet I can't get it out o' my head. Whenever I hear of Christina, I do think of that beautiful, soft, velvet-looking beast, so very handsome and so very treacherous. Then there's Mr Louis Philippe, he's like——

Slowgoe. There now! I won't stop! I know what you're arter. In a minute you'll be putting all the Continental crowned heads into cages and ticketing 'em.

Nutts. Nothin' o' the sort. Though, when you speak of cages, there is certainly some o' the Continentals, as you call 'em, safest seen on this side o' the bars.

Peabody. Talking of the Virgin, here is something about her from the *Constitutionnel* (*reads*): "It is said that the Virgin of Atocha, on the day of the marriage, was covered *with a magnificent chemisette*, a present of Ferdinand VII. on his return

in 1814, and a petticoat, *admirably embroidered*, by Don Antonio, the uncle of Ferdinand."

Nutts. "Admirably embroidered!" Now isn't it a pity, Mr Slowgoe, when you see fortin' taking people out of their proper spear, making 'em kings, when they should ha' been men-milliners? Carrying swords and sceptres, and golden—what you call them round things, eh, Mr Peabody?—you've been a schoolmaster.

Peabody. The ball—the ball of sovereignty. When a king holds that ball in his hand, at his coronation, the ball is typical of the whole earth; the world is in his hand.

Nutts. And I'm blessed if some on 'em don't play worst tricks with it than an ape plays with a cocoa-nut! But I was going to say, isn't it a thing to cry over, to think that fellows like Ferdinand——

Slowgoe. I *must* leave the shop. I do not agree with all the principles of that reverend—I mean of that monarch; nevertheless, he once wore a crown upon his head, and I must respect him.

Nutts. Well, then, I suppose if all the monkeys in the world was to go mad, and crown an ourang-outang for their king—I suppose you'd respect him?

Slowgoe. I can't answer for myself; but I think I should.

Nosebag. Worked "a magnificent chemisette"!

Well, for a king, that was a precious thimble-rig !

Slowgoe. You're an ignorant man, Mr Nosebag ; as dead to true respect as the walls you stick your bills agin. The thimble-rig, as you call it—mind I'm no Papist—was, he thought, for the good of his soul.

Nosebag. Very careful of his soul, no doubt. For all o' that, I shouldn't ha' liked to ha' played his gracious Majesty with a table at Epsom. He'd have always know'd where the pea was, depend on 't.

Slowgoe. Nevertheless, the Spaniards are a fine people, a proud people, a very proud people.

Nutts. Well, I don't see what they've got to be proud on.

Slowgoe. Their ancestors were very great men, and therefore they're proud.

Nutts. Now, that reminds me of that lazy varmint Jack Blaze. He does nothin' but smoke cigars, play at skittles, borrow money, and swindle everybody as will trust him. Ask him to work on his own account, and he talks o' the pride of the Blazes : only hint to him that you should like to have the price o' that pot o' beer you lent him five years ago, and he'll strike his chest, and still—there's the pride of the Blazes ! And why ? The fact is, a hundred years ago, Jack had a relation as

was a full private in the royal dragoons; and he got a deal of glory, and all that, and Jack can never forget it. Now family pride's very well, when it's kept up by the family working for it. And I dare say Blaze the dragoon was a very fine fellow in his time; but for what he did a hundred years ago, I can't pay his relation, Jack Blaze, who won't do nothing for himself now. Family pride, and national pride, to be worth anything, should be like a tree—taking root years ago, but having apples every year. Now Spanish pride appears to me a good deal like a Spanish chestnut—so long in the ground that it's very near done bearing.

Slowgoe. You're so full of prejudice, Mr Nutts, there's no talking to you. What's this? From the *Bristol Times*, I see. (*Reads.*) "The permissions to shoot *over the Beaufort estates* in Monmouthshire *have been withdrawn by the Duke* from those gentlemen who are known to support Lord G. Somerset, his brother-in-law." Very right. The Duke of Beaufort knows what is due to his own dignity. If he allows to voters the right of shooting partridges, it's only fair he should have the run of their votes.

Nutts. To be sure. It is but right. The voter, we'll say, bags a pheasant, and the Duke bags a conscience. Nothin' but proper.

Tickle. Here's a dreadful case. (*Reads.*)

“Twelve young women brought up for breaking windows in St George’s Workhouse.—It seemed they came to the workhouse, and were informed that they could not be admitted until the evening, on which they commenced throwing at the windows. The defendants said that they were starving about the streets, and they admitted they broke the windows that they might be sent to gaol, which was preferable to wandering about the streets destitute and strangers.”

Nutts. A bad case. And surely something must be wrong, when starving folks are made, in this way, to turn stones into bread.





CHAPTER XI.

NOSEBAG. (*With paper.*) The King of the French seems giving away crosses like winkin'!

Tickle. Hardly surprised at that. If things don't take a turn, shouldn't wonder if he hasn't a good many to spare. Hasn't sent you anything, eh, Nutts?

Nutts. Not yet; though I've kept a sharp eye for the Parcels Delivery all the week. Considerin' what a shower of crosses and snuff-boxes is coming down, I don't well see how a man's to miss one of 'em.

Slowgoe. A great man Louis Philippe! He didn't come at the crown, certainly, in the reg'lar way; but I'm beginning to be reconciled to him, he's getting so like the Emperor of Rushy and the rest of 'em. Talking about crosses, Mr Nutts, how should you like Louis Philippe's pictur?

Nutts. Why, that would entirely depend upon

the di'monds. I must say I shouldn't value it much myself, if the pawnbroker didn't.

Slowgoe. Pawn a crowned head, Mr Nutts! But it's like your levelling ways.

Nutts. Why, it isn't often we *can* turn kings to profit, and one shouldn't miss a chance. Besides, when the war once began, I should pawn the enemy's pictur on principle.

Slowgoe. Pooh! There'll be no war. Things look a little black at present, but Louis Philippe's a great man: he'll smile it all clear again.

Tickle. They do say he can't get a bit o' sleep o' nights for thinking of the noise in Shee'ness Dockyard: when they're doing nothing but calking a whole squadron.

Slowgoe. What for?

Tickle. Why, in case anything happens, I suppose, to take the Queen of England's kindest regards to the French Fleet. And they do say, that when the war breaks out, Admiral Joinville has taken a private oath to captur the *Victoria and Albert*, with the Queen and the Prince, and little Wales, and all the royal babbies, and Sir Jeames Clark and Doctor Locock, and the whole of the crew.

Nutts. Well, I don't know, for the babbies' sake, if I should be sorry for it.

Slowgoe. Why, you traitorous—rebellious!—Mr Peabody, as a policeman, can you bear this?

Peabody. Yes: anything; I'm not on duty.

Nutts. Hear me out. Sometimes when I wake o' nights my heart bleeds for them babbies. Haven't you all read what Sir Frederick Trench says, that in Buckin'ham Palace the royal children have such small bedrooms that they 're like the little princes smothered in the Tower? Now, if they was to be taken just for two or three years to France, while the new palace was building, they wouldn't, as it's now very likely, be stopt in their growth. Only think of a Prince of Wales with not room enough to stretch himself! Now, the King of the French, I've no doubt on it, would give 'em all nice roomy quarters at Yow.

Peabody. Beg your pardon, Mr Nutts; but—Eu! It's difficult, I know; but—Eu!

Nightflit. It's all very well; but if once Louis Philippe caught hold o' them babbies, he'd never let 'em go till he'd married every one on 'em to his grandsons and granddaughters. But there won't be no war.

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) I think not; nevertheless, I see our 'Bassador, Lord Normandy—

Nosebag. A noble gen'l'man that!

Slowgoe. Humph! For a Whig. I see the *Réforme*—how I hate that word!—a French paper, says, "Considerable bets were made yesterday at

the Jockey Club that Lord Normandy would have a fit of gout, by order of his Government, at the period of the feasts which are to be given at Versailles on the arrival of the Duchess of Montpensier. Those bets exceed 2000 louis." Ha! what we call perlitical gout.

Nutts. Well, considering the lots o' children in the palace, I wouldn't have gout, if I was his Lordship: no, to make it quite safe, I'd have nothing less than measles.

Tickle. (*With paper.*) His Lordship may remain in health; for another paper, I see, says this: "We announced that a grand theatrical representation was to take place at Versailles on the occasion of the marriage of the Duke de Montpensier; but the King, deeply touched with disasters which have fallen on several of the departments, has countermanded all kinds of rejoicing." Poor little Duchess! Her honeymoon hasn't begun so pleasant, has it? To be sure, she's seen a few bulls killed, and, as the accounts say, "the usual number" of horses gored and slaughtered.

Nutts. More than that. I was reading that one of the men that fought the bulls has since died of his wounds.

Peabody. Well, I'm not superstitious myself; but the Greeks and the Romans wouldn't have foretold much of a marriage so soon followed by

death and a deluge. I must say, I *do* prophesy a war.

Nutts. Why, there's no doubt on it. One of our Ministers has wrote a confidential letter to another advising him to send to Manchester, to order I don't know how many tons of gun-cotton; for powder, you know, is exploded.

Slowgoe. How do you know this, if the letter was confidential?

Nutts. I know it from his Lordship's footman, who found the letter in his master's letter-basket; that footman has a good eye for a penn'orth, and—but let this be between us—that private letter will appear to-morrow in the *Morning Post*! I tell you, tons of gun-cotton.

Mrs Nutts. What is all this about gun-cotton? Cotton going off and blowing up! Well, as I was saying to Mrs Biggleswade over the way, it's enough to frighten a woman from ever taking a needle-and-thread in her hand. I don't know how it is; but now, somehow, I do dread to go near my cotton-box.

Slowgoe. That's not a new complaint with Mrs Slowgoe, by any means.

Tickle. A very fine invention this gun-cotton, no doubt; but it gives a dreadful power to husbands: no woman's safe.

Mrs Nutts. Bless my soul, Mr Tickle! Not

that I've any fear of Nutts, but do tell me what you mean. How do they make the gun-cotton go off?

Tickle. That's it. You take the cotton and you steeps it in what they call a sirlution of hydrogen and hogsesgin and creamovallygin.

Mrs Nutts. Dreadful!

Tickle. And then you dry it; and then it's prepared. One woman's blow'd to bits already, and the police is after her husband. I see you haven't heard about it. Certainly it has been strangely kept out o' the newspapers.

Mrs Nutts. Ha! that's because only men write for the newspapers, Mr Tickle. If it had been the other way; yes, if a poor woman had only killed her husband, we should never have heard the last of it. But of course a wife's nothing. Go on, Mr Tickle—I've made the pudding, Mr Nutts; you needn't be looking knives and forks at me in that manner.—Go on: the poor soul was blown to bits?

Tickle. You see, she would go to the play; and because she'd go, her husband wouldn't.

Mrs Nutts. Just like the whole sect: go on.

Tickle. Well, it is supposed from what followed that her husband went unbeknown to her drawers, and——

Mrs Nutts. What! She never kept 'em locked?

Well, perhaps it's wrong for one woman to say it of another; but after that, whatever she suffered, it served her right. Not lock her drawers! Well, I have been married to Nutts these seventeen years, and——

Nutts. And I'm as well as could be expected after it. Proceed, Mr Tickle.

Tickle. Went unbeknown to her drawers, and got the poor woman's cotton gown, and steeped it in all the gins I've said: and squeezed it; and dried it; and put it back again. Well, the poor soul dressed herself, thinking nothing of the villany of her husband——

Mrs Nutts. Jest like us; and fools we are for our pains.

Tickle. And went away to go to the Surr'y pit. Mr Macready, the imminent tragedian, was to play, and there was a precious squeezing, you may be sure. Well, the doomed 'oman, with the gun-cotton gown upon her——

Mrs Nutts. Dear soul! But she ought to have locked her drawers.

Tickle. With the gun-cotton gown upon her, was standing in the middle of the crowd. Well, when the doors was opened there was a general rush and crush—a bang was heard—the people screamed—the cotton gown had exploded——

Mrs Nutts. And the dear woman?

Tickle. A little white smoke went slowly over the heads o' the mob, and that was all that was ever seen of her.

Mrs Nutts. Well, what's gone can't be brought back ; but it's a blessed comfort to think of, they'll hang the husband when they catch him.

Peabody. They can't, ma'am. By the law of England, Mrs Nutts, they can do nothing to the man.

Mrs Nutts. To be sure, not. I'd forgot. He's only killed his wife ; and what's a wife ? Men make laws, of course ; and when they make 'em, don't they take care o' themselves ? However, we shall have our turn. Yes, yes ! the world—as I said to Mrs Biggleswade over the way—the world is going on, and must take us women with it. Of course, Mr Peabody, though you are a policeman, you'll take the husband's part ; of course. Nevertheless, I *should* like to know why they can't hang him ? The brute !

Peabody. Now, in the first place, my dear Mrs Nutts——

Nutts. Don't talk to her in that way : I tell you she's never been used to it.

Peabody. In the first place, there's no evidence. Gun-cotton leaves nothing behind it—not a vestige. Certainly there is evidence to prove that one minute there was a woman, in a certain gown, in

a certain place ; that there was a report : and then there was no woman ; nothing more than a little white floating smoke. Now, Mrs Nutts, the law can't be satisfied with this. Where *is* the woman ? Where's her remains ? The majesty of the English law demands the body to sit upon.

Mrs Nutts. Fiddle-dee — nonsense ! There's plenty of people to swear that the man had a wife, and now he can't show one : isn't that enough ?

Nosebag. I should say no ; because it's very well known in any court o' law that wives do sometimes go off without a bit o' gun-cotton in the matter.

Nutts. So you see, Mrs Nutts, your life is in my hands. I've only to make you a present of a nice-prepared cotton gown, and——

Mrs Nutts. Don't you think it, Mr Nutts ; for from this blessed minute, knowing what I do know—and I hope all women will follow my example—I'll never wear nothing but silk.

Slowgoe. Gun-cotton ! I don't believe a word about it. All new-fangled stuff. If we once go to war with gun-cotton, and give up our honest powder—the powder that won a Nile, and Trafalgar, and Waterloo—there's an end of the British Constitution. They're going to take the flints out of the muskets, too, and trust to 'cussion-caps. Well, if a war does come, I hope we shan't

see the King o' the French, not only King of Great Britain, but the Governor of the Bank of England.

Nutts. Wonderful discoveries, certainly! We make gunpowder of cotton to make wounds with, and lint out of linen to cure 'em.

Peabody. I wonder what Friar Bacon would say if he knew it. Friar Bacon, Mr Nosebag, was a parson, and invented gunpowder. You knew that, I suppose?

Nosebag. No, I didn't; but from some parsons I've heard and read about, I can quite believe it.

Slowgoe. Well, my 'pinion is, if Friar Bacon was to hear of this gun-cotton, as you call it, he'd treat it with the contempt it deserves. I say again, I don't believe it.

Nutts. Suppose you was blown up to the Monument by it?

Slowgoe. Well, I hate a man who doesn't stick to his principles—I wouldn't believe it then.

Nutts. Ha! Mr Slowgoe, don't you in that manner fly in the face of fortin and your washer-woman. At this very moment, I look upon it, every man's life is in the hands of his clear-starcher; for who knows what they'll make starch of now? and then for gowns and petticoats, and——

Mrs Nutts. There; hold your tongue, Mr Nutts. I'll be on my guard, I assure you. You don't get rid of me like the poor woman at the Surr'y, I can

tell you. For if the gun-cotton only wants a good pressing to go off, I won't wear a blessed stitch that I don't first see well mangled.

Nutts. You're a prudent woman, Mrs Nutts. Nevertheless, you've talked quite enough to-day; and I don't know that you've any partic'lar business at all in the shop.

Mrs Nutts. Don't you? Then I have business; and I tell you what—now little Tommy's weaned, it's my intention to come and have a long talk in the shop every week. You're not going to have it all your own way, as you *have* done, I can assure you.





CHAPTER XII.

SLOWGOE. (*With paper.*) Oh yes; it's plain enough: more danger in the Church of England. Here's something taken from the *Morning Herald* that shows how the cat jumps.

Nutts. Well, I'm not partic'lar about cats in common, but *how* does she jump?

Slowgoe. Towards Rome, Mr Nutts; yes, towards the Scarlet——

Nutts. Mr Slowgoe, beg your pardon, but Mrs Nutts is in the shop.

Mrs Nutts. Never mind me, Mr Slowgoe, if I am in the shop. The children's washed, the meat's sent to the bakehouse, and I shall just sit down and enjoy myself. Go on, Mr Slowgoe.

Slowgoe. The *Morning Herald*, talking of the danger to the Church, says this much, that English people going to Rome, catch the Catholic

religion without knowing it. Listen. "Such families were generally lodged in some portion of a vacant palace or mansion. Commonly there was soon found dwelling in some adjacent part of the same building *an accomplished and agreeable* priest or Jesuit. This person soon found an opportunity of rendering some service ; obtaining access for the family to some gallery or museum, or an invitation to some concert." You see, Mr Nutts, how the thing's done?

Mrs Nutts. Taking advantage of pleasure to undermined our principles ! Playing us into Popery with flutes and fiddles !

Nosebag. Well, but if folks will go to see the shows at Rome, when they 'd better stay at home and be edified at their own playhouses—what's to become on 'em?

Tickle. Why, it just strikes me that we might fight 'em with their own weapons. For instance, you say "an agreeable and accomplished priest or Jesuit" is the disturber of the peace of families. Well, before the family starts, why don't they take with 'em—just as they take cork jackets and life-preservers—"an agreeable and accomplished" 'Stablished chaplain to battle for 'em on the other side?

Mrs Nutts. Very right, Mr Tickle ; and if I was the Queen o' England, I 'd make a law that should force 'em. I thank my stars I shall never go to

Rome ; but if I should, I wouldn't think myself safe with anything less than a bishop.

Slowgoe. Nor I. Not that I'd think of turning my religion for——

Nutts. Tell you what, Slowgoe, some folk's religion's like some folk's coats—too poor to be worth turning.

Mrs Nutts. Never mind him, Mr Slowgoe. You know the sort o' husband I'm blessed with. As for the Papists, I often say to Mrs Biggleswade over the way, "I wonder you can buy your cat's-meat o' that Biddy Maloney, when you know he's a Papist and goes to a Catholic chapel. No wonder, my dear," says I to Mrs Biggleswade, "that you can't keep a linnet or canary from the claws o' that cat. Think what she's fed on, and who brings it her."

Slowgoe. As for the Jesoots, Mrs Nutts, they're swarming in every house—swarming like fleas, and we don't know it.

Nutts. Not at all like our fleas, then ! Ecod, you'd soon know *them* !

Mrs Nutts. A pretty speech, I think, for a husband. I assure you, Mr Slowgoe, if we've a single flea in the house, that is, a flea to speak of, I'm—but what—you know Mr Nutts!—always likes to make his wife little before strangers.

Slowgoe. I was speaking of the Jesoots——

Mrs Nutts. I know 'em, Mr Slowgoe. I had the ague once ; and didn't folks want me to take their bark : but no, said I—I'll die first.

Slowgoe. And I was going to say that this last blessed Thursday—fifth o' November as was—Guy Fox Day, Dunpowder Day—why, it only proves the Jesoots are everywhere. When I was a boy, Guys was respected. Where are they now ? I didn't see ten in all Lunnun, Mrs Nutts ; and I made it my business to walk about and count 'em. And what Guys, too ! But it's the fashion to sneer at and put down the wisdom of ancestors ; and that's why the fifth o' November is come to what it is. The church bells ring, to be sure, but with nothing hearty in 'em ; they ring as if the whole thing was a joke. Oh, when I was a boy, didn't my father make squibs and crackers, what I call a moral duty on Bonfire Day ! And didn't the neighbours club their old coats, and waistcoats, and breeches, as if they was proud on 'em being made up into Guys : that was turning out handsome, splendid-looking Popes ; things really worth the burning. And now, what are they ? Well, I've lived to see something ! When I looked upon the things they called Guys o' Thursday, things no bigger than Tom Thumbs, with brown paper faces—I know it's a little weak, still I'm not ashamed of it for all that—I could ha' burst into crying. As I'm a Christian sinner, and a

lover o' the Constitution, there wasn't one on 'em decent for the flames.

Tickle. Well, now, if you had a bit o' proper constitutional respect in you, you should ha' just put on your Sunday best, and gone to the flames for 'em.

Nightflit. (*With paper.*) A dreadful affair this in St Pancras' parish! A poor, dear, innocent servant-girl shamefully treated by a vestryman.

Mrs Nutts. Just like 'em; go on. Shamefully treated! Oh, I wish they'd just let me take half an hour to myself to make a few laws for the men! I mean, that is, for ourselves. Laws never will be what they ought to be till women help to make 'em.

Nutts. Nonsense! keep to pie-crusts. A pretty light hand you'd have for a statute. What did the vestryman do to the gal?

Nightflit. Why, one vestryman, Mr Douglas, charges another vestryman, Mr Pike, with taking a servant-maid and chucking her——

Mrs Nutts. Into the canal, of course. Just like the men.

Nightflit. Not into the canal, ma'am; certainly not. He chucked her under the chin!

Nutts. There, Mrs Nutts! Aint you sorry you spoke? Chucked her under the chin! What do you say now?

Mrs Nutts. Say? Why, what I said afore—that it's just like the men. But read all about it. And I've no doubt a married man, too!

Nightflit. It all came out at a meeting o' Pancras' vestry. Mr Douglas says that Mr Pike, being upon canvas and asking for a vote, "chucked" the gal under the chin—as I s'pose for her master's interest.

Nutts. Well, where's the great harm o' that?

Mrs Nutts. Mr Nutts! if you go on with such sentiments, I tell you this, I'll go up-stairs! I won't stop and listen to you.

Nightflit. Well, Mr Pike, the culprit as was thought, was called in——

Nosebag. To slow music, o' course?

Nightflit. Called into the vestry, and put upon his defence. Poor gentleman! When he said—here it is in the paper (*reads*): "It is untrue, upon my honour: in the presence of my God, it is untrue. I know myself better than to be guilty of *so humiliating an act*. I have more respect for myself than to chuck *any servant-girl* under the chin, *and least of all* the servant of a vestryman of St Pancras'." This declaration seemed to satisfy the chairman and his fellow-vestrymen. Very awful business, isn't it, Mrs Nutts? Poor Mr Pike, innocent as a lamb!

Mrs Nutts. Oh yes; to be sure; of course; never

know'd a man who wasn't innocent! Don't see, though, why a servant-gal should be looked down upon in that way: been in service myself. *Any* servant-gal, indeed!

Tickle. Wouldn't chuck nothin', maybe, under a lady's-maid.

Nutts. Very partic'lar tender parish St Pancras'; tender as a maid's face, to be sure: and certainly it does become the same parish to kick up such a hubbub about chucking a girl's chin, when they don't mind chucking a poor pauper wench into the "shed," as they call it; and so—when she gets out—driving her to chuck herself into the canal, to be dragged out for a coroner's jury to sit upon. It isn't much, when they crowd gals and old women into the "shed," and the "feather-room," and places that fond o' pork wouldn't keep pigs in; that's not much—oh no! Poor Mary Ann Jones may chuck herself into the canal and be drowned—she's only a pauper, as the song says, "as nobody owns;" but to chuck a gal's chin—ha! that's something dreadful—and the vestry, as I've read somewhere, "feels it's man's first duty to fly to her succour."

Tickle. I hope Mr Pike will get over the shock; though I *have* heard he's so taken it to heart, the very thought o' chucking the chin of a servant-gal—though where will you see prettier chins for a

red ribbin sometimes?—that he's gone ill, had his knocker tied up, and straw laid down afore the door.

Peabody. And yet, I believe, it's quite regular—a courtesy only expected upon a canvas. Why, there's hardly a member of the House of Commons that doesn't feel it his bounden duty to give a kiss for every vote.

Mrs Nutts. And, as I say, many of 'em married men, no doubt? It really makes one shudder!

Peabody. Now, I take it, the little attention is in a very fair proportion. If a candidate for the House of Commons kisses, surely a vestryman may "chuck."

Mrs Nutts. There, Mr Peabody; you've been a schoolmaster, I know, and it's like you scholars; feelings are nothing in your hands. You take 'em and twist 'em and turn 'em into as many ways and shapes as the man that goes about with a sheet o' writing-paper, and folds it into everything, from a coal-scuttle to a chest o' drawers. Just like scholars, as they're called: and how I *do* pity their wives!

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) Here's another man writes that he can make gunpowder out of sawdust, another out of paper, another out of anything.

Mrs Nutts. I read that about the sawdust myself, and for that reason I never again grate a

nutmeg with my own hands; for the world's taken such a turn, who now can say what will happen? As I said to Mrs Biggleswade over the way, it's my opinion, since they can find gunpowder in a cotton gown, and, in fact, gunpowder in everything, why, we mightn't know one minute from the t'other when the whole world will be blown up!

Tickle. And that's your opinion, Mrs Nutts.

Mrs Nutts. It just is; and I was thinkin' of it only yesterday, just as the tax-gatherer called for the rates. And so—although I'd the money ready in a cup in the cupboard—so being in the dumps, not knowing how long the world would last, I just thought it safest to tell the man to call again.

Nutts. When you die, my love, what a deal of prudence you'll take out of the world with you!

Mrs Nutts. More than enough, Mr Nutts, to keep twenty men comfortable in it.





CHAPTER XIII.

MRS NUTTS. I don't wonder we're poor, Mr Nutts; sitting there reading the news when you should be minding your bus'ness and your family.

Nutts. Bless the woman!

Mrs Nutts. Yes; bless the man!—but that does no good, one way or the other.

Nutts. Can't I have a bit of quiet news to myself afore the customers come in?

Mrs Nutts. Not with your razors in the state they are. 'Twould be another thing if you was stropped as you ought to be. And I must tell you this——

Nutts. And I must tell you, Mrs Nutts, that I won't have you here in the shop. 'Tisn't your place.

Mrs Nutts. Don't you think it? All the years

I've been married to you, I've been kept in the background—and you know it, Nutts. Very well, as I said afore, Tommy's weaned, and now I shall come for'ard and enjoy myself. Women, as I said to Mrs Biggleswade over the way—women have been kept too long under, a good deal too long. But it is my intention now, Nutts—and I give you fair warnin'—to jine the movement.

Nutts. I wish you'd lead it and get out of this. (*Mrs Nutts determinedly drops in a chair.*) Well, you are the most aggravating thing as ever wore petticoats; you are—— (SLOWGOE, PEABODY, NOSEBAG, &c., *drop in.*) Mrs Nutts, my darling, where's the hot water?

Mrs Nutts. On the fire, and minding its business. Biling, as it ought to do, Mr Nutts.

Slowgoe. I'm first, Nutts; but I'm in no hurry. I haven't heard a bit of news this week: feel quite starving. (*Takes paper—sits.*) Well, I've often thought what Rob'son Crusoe did without a newspaper. To me, a paper's meat and drink, and a blanket to sleep in. Ha! so I see the Duke of Borducks——

Peabody. Beg your pardon—Bordeaux.

Slowgoe. I know; but it's Borducks in English. He's got a wife at last. The Duke of Modena's sister—aged thirty—with four millions of money!

Mrs Nutts. Poor thing! I hope she's settled

every penny on it on herself, else a nice life she'll have of it.

Nutts. Four millions of money, and got safe to thirty with it ! 'Twouldn't have happened had she been in England ! She'd had a swarm o' Irish barristers stopping her on the king's highway, every one with his heart and weddin'-ring. Four millions ! Why, sweethearts would have swarmed round her like flies round a sugar-cask.

Mrs Nutts. A very pretty comparison, Mr Nutts, for a husband and a father.

Nosebag. Well, I don't know ; but to think of a woman with sich a mountain o' gold—it seems unnat'ral.

Nutts. Quite awful to think of ! Besides, quite impossible, too, that any man could love her.

Mrs Nutts. And I should like to know why not ?

Nutts. The money, Mrs Nutts, the money ; it must distract his attention. No man's heart can be big enough to hold four millions o' money and a wife at the same time.

Mrs Nutts. Just like you, Nutts. But I know what you'd have done if you'd have been a dook. Yes ; *you'd* have had room enough in your heart for all the money ; and as for the poor 'oman, she might have taken her chance and have stayed outside.

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Mrs Nutts. I see nothing to laugh at. And it's enough to make a woman's flesh creep to hear you men.

Tickle. No offence, Mrs Nutts; but the fact is, women have no bus'ness with sich a lot o' money. 'Tisn't giving us men a fair chance. Woman, as I've always said, is fascinatin' enough without a penny—always has the odds of us, if she hasn't a farden; but when jined to everything else, she comes among us with millions o' money—why, it isn't fair love-making; no, it's nothing short of manslaughter.

Slowgoe. How *did* Louis Philippe overlook her? Why, the Infanta hasn't got above a fourth of the sum—only a million.

Mrs Nutts. Poor little thing! And nicely that brute her father-in-law will snub her for it now, I daresay. A wife, and only fourteen too! Well, if she'd been my daughter—but I'll say nothing. Only as a married woman I *will* say this, she's begun her troubles early enough.

Nutts. Well, who knows?—she may the sooner get through 'em.

Mrs Nutts. Nutts—but I won't tell you *what* you are, now.

Slowgoe. Lord Normandy, I see, as 'Bassador for England, didn't pay his public compliments to the

happy pair ; and the Funds, I see, went down because.

Nosebag. Why, no ; but his Lordship went afterwards in private and took tea and muffins with 'em, and upon that the Funds riz like a rocket.

Peabody. The *Times* says that Louis Philippe has retained Lord Brougham to plead his cause in the House of Lords. M. Guizot, they say, has loaded him with all the papers—rammed him down like a piece of brass ordnance with all sorts of wadding—and, there's no doubt of it, he'll go off with a considerable bang.

Tickle. No doubt on it ; and just as sailors do when they board—get the better of their lordships in the smoke. Wonder what fee Lewis Philip's to give Brougham for the job ? for, being a lawyer, he can't work for nothing.

Peabody. Why, they do say it's to be made up to his Lordship somehow in his arms. He's to be allowed to quarter every boar he kills at Cannes, and put him upon his coach panels ; and further, he and his heirs for ever and ever are to be permitted to land anywhere in France, and not to have their pockets rummaged inside out by customhouse officers. It's further said that Lord Brougham intends to plead the King of the French's cause in French, that his Lordship may

seem to be as little of an Englishman in the matter as possible.

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) Well, I hope I'm a lover of the institutions of my country—but I think this is pulling the rope a little too tight. I always stand up for the Church, and always will, like any steeple; but—I'm sorry to own it—but, as a great man has said afore me, this is too bad.

Nosebag. What's the matter? Anybody been sticking posters agin St Paul's? As a billsticker, I must say I've often looked with an eye of envy at Queen Anne—often wished to stick her.

Slowgoe. Here's a letter from the *Times*; from a gentleman whose wife and party was asked sixpence at St Paul's on Lord Mayor's Day, because "she was told when once in, they might see the Lord Mayor's show there, when it came back in three or four hours."

Nutts. Well, Mother Church is now and then a good 'un at a bargain, for certain. Nice ways that to turn a penny with the men in armour—nice way of showing a mayor and a mayor's coach-horses at threepence a peep.

Limpy. Well, it's just struck me that if Mr Taylor of the Surrey 'Logical Gardens don't mind what he's at, the nobs of St Paul's will next summer get quite the better on him.

Slowgoe. I can't see that. I don't defend St

Paul's in the matter of the show, but I don't see how that venerable building is to be opposed to the lions and tigers at feedin'-time.

Limpy. In this way, I mean. At the 'Logical Gardens, you know, there is always a "grand display of fireworks." Very well. Admittance one shilling. Very well. Now if the folks of St Paul's took it into their heads, couldn't they admit the public to the top of the church, where they might have a comfortable view of the 'ruption and the rockets, all at half-price?—for a little sixpence?

Slowgoe. Humph! I don't think they'd do that.

Tickle. Well, I don't know; when they make a peep-show of a mayor's gold coach and liveries, I wouldn't trust 'em with Wesuvius. Sorry am I to say it; sorry am I to believe that any church could so forget itself as to think of making a penny by fireworks.

Mrs Nutts. Don't talk in that wicked way, Mr Tickle; but you 've learnt it all from my husband. And—sorry am I to say it, but though I'm his wife, he's no more religion than a tombstone; for, however near he may be to a church, he's not a bit the better for it.

Nutts. (Solemnly.) Mrs Nutts, it is one of the few grievances of the marriage-state, that a woman

may take away her husband's character, and the poor man have no remedy for it.

Tickle. None: unless he pays himself heavy damages out of his own pocket.

Nosebag. And goes with 'em—which he always may do—to the public-house.

Mrs Nutts. Oh, you needn't teach him that. But I was going to ask, Mr Slowgoe, is it true that they're going to take the dear Dook down again from the Park arch?

Tickle. Why, they do say he's received warning. All I know is he's beginning to look very black about something.

Mrs Nutts. Well, I don't know—I was saying so to Mrs Biggleswade over the way—but after all that had been said, he looked very nice and comfortable. To be sure the horse does look a little more concerned about the battle than the Dook himself; but Mrs Biggleswade assures me that that's quite as the thing happened, all according to 'istory. But why—I want to know, after all the fuss of lugging him up—why is he coming down agin?

Nosebag. Why, the *Daily Noose* says that the Queen has done it all. Her Majesty, having a taste, and knowing how a gentleman ought to look on horseback, won't have the Dook nohow.

Slowgoe. That's one story; but I think the

other much more likely. And that is, that it's against the Queen's prerogative, and contrary to her state and dignity, to have any subject perched upon so high a place that her carriage must drive right under him. And now I think of it—for it never struck me before—there is a sort of a petty treason in it. Good thing Sir Frederick Trench didn't live in Queen Elizabeth's time. *She* knew how to use her royal prerogative; she'd have had his head off to a certain.

Tickle. Suppose she had. What would she have made o' that? Why, nothin'.

Mrs Nutts. But the poor soul and his horse must go somewhere! What's to become of him, can any good Christian tell?

Nutts. Very like a traveller gone astray, and wanting good entertainment for man and beast.

Tickle. Well, I have heard, if nothing better can be done with it, that it's to be taken somewhere to the sea-coast, and made a sort of lighthouse of.

Mrs Nutts. A lighthouse of! A lighthouse! How?

Tickle. Why, by fitting up a revolving light inside the statue's head, to warn ships from sands and rocks.

Slowgoe. And after all, I, for one, should have no objection to it. After all, 'twould be a very

pretty compliment to the aristocracy o' the land. (*Rising from his chair.*) For are they not the lights and beacons that in time of danger——

Nutts. Come, none o' that nonsense in this place. We're none of us Lord Georges here.

Slowgoe. Mr Nutts, I have once, remember—*once* left your shop.

Nutts. Well, I never care to balk a customer, not I; so you may take it even numbers if you like.

Mrs Nutts. Don't mind him, Mr Slowgoe; he's a man as hates all authority. Talks, too, about the perlitical principles! All very well and very fine for bachelors, but I should very much like to know what men with wives and families have to do with principles at all—eh, Mr Peabody? You who've been a schoolmaster can answer that, I should think.

Peabody. Very true, Mrs Nutts; for the great Lord Bacon—you have heard of him—eh, Mrs Nutts?

Mrs Nutts. No doubt on it; but I can't bring him to mind just now.

Peabody. The great Lord Bacon was accustomed over his wine to say, that the man who had a wife and children had given hostages to fortune.

Mrs Nutts. And just like a good many of 'em. There's Nutts there, for all his fine perlitical prin-

ciples, I've often told him—and Lord Bacon makes it true—that he wouldn't mind giving his wife and children to anybody, so *he* wasn't troubled with 'em. Only he's not likely to give them to *fortune*, as the lord tells of—not he, indeed ; more like to force his poor wife to another Union ; well, it can't be worse than the first.





CHAPTER XIV.

SLOWGOE, TICKLE, PEABODY, *and others waiting.*

MRS NUTTS *comes from back room.*

TICKLE. Why, Mrs Nutts, where's the master? Not gone to Brighton and left you to shave?

Mrs Nutts. Ha, Mr Tickle! I only wish I could shave. I've often said it 'ud be a nice light business for us poor women. I only wish I could shave! Anything to get money one's self; anything rather than be going to a man's pocket for every farden. Why—I've often asked it—*why* shouldn't women shave?

Slowgoe. Nonsense! Taking men by the nose! Men—the rulers of the world! Pooh! what revolution, I should like to know, next?

Mrs Nutts. Rulers of the world! Ha, the world never will run right, Mr Slowgoe, till women put

their hands a little more to it. And as for taking you rulers by the noses, I don't think any of you need turn 'em up for that. I'm sure you men monopolise everything. Very little you leave us to do ; and what we could do, you won't let us ; and for this reason, in course, to keep us your slaves. I only wish I was the Queen of England ! Wouldn't I set the example of shaving, that's all ?

Tickle. Why, how, Mrs Nutts ? how ?

Mrs Nutts. How ? Why, as I say, I'd bring in fashion. I'd make a Maid of Honour, or something of that sort, shave my own lawful husband ; and I'd see it done, too, every morning ; shave him just to set the thing agoing. That would give employment to lots of poor things that has nothing now but the needle.

NUTTS *comes in.*

Nosebag. Why, Nutts, you've just come in time. In another minute, and your wife would ha' taken the business out of your hands.

Nutts. Yes, I know ; jest the presumption of women ; think they can do anything their husbands do. If I was a Horse Guardsman, she'd think she'd look quite as well as me in boots, helmet, and regimentals. It's like all wives ; but it's our own fault—I've often said it. We're too

free with 'em : it's the famil'arity breeds contempt. Women shave, indeed !

Mrs Nutts. And why not ? A very light, genteel livelihood. Better than making shirts, I'm sure ; for a woman with a razor in her hand wouldn't be the unpertected thing she is now.

Nutts. Now, Mrs Nutts, suppose you go and look to the apple-sarce, and, for a little while, be quiet with your own. Burns the baker has promised to do the pig like a pictur ; that's why I took it myself ; brown and crisp, and——

Mrs Nutts. Well, Nutts, I wouldn't worship a roast pig as you do, for its weight in gold ; I should think something would happen to me. You, with a wife and family, to be the slave you are to crackling !

Nutts. If a great man hadn't one weakness, he wouldn't be fit society for the miserable sinners in this world about him. I have one weakness—jest one—and that is now in the oven. Now, Mr Nosebag, shall I make you fit for company ?
(*Nosebag takes the chair.*)

Mrs Nutts. Well, I have one comfort, Nutts ; if anything should happen to you, I've seen you shave so often, that I'm sure I could keep the children, and do it quite as well myself, if the customers would trust me.

Tickle. You shall have my custom, Mrs

Nutts. I wouldn't desert the widder of my friend.

Nosebag. Nor I.

Nutts. Gentlemen, allow me for a moment to think myself dead and buried, and to thank you warmly from the churchyard. Your friendship for my widder and fatherless babes is quite affectin'.

Slowgoe. (*With paper.*) There really is no enjoying a bit of news. Such nonsense! Women shaving men, indeed! They might be allowed to lather us, and that, I think, is going quite far enough. But *do* let us talk of something serious. This, now, is rather an awful matter. This time—and no mistake—Mother Church really is in danger.

Tickle. Well, she's used to it; by this time, I should think, must rather like it. What's the matter?

Slowgoe. Oh, the old enemy—the Scarlet Woman of Rome. Here's the Surrey Protestant Alliance as meets at the Horns, in Kensington. It's all out. Colonel Sir Digby Mackworth says, all the reporters of the newspapers are all of 'em Papishes.

Mrs Nutts. La! Never! Well, if that's true, not a newspaper comes into this house! If he was to come to life again, I'd jest as soon let the back attic to Guy Fawkes.

Slowgoe. All Papishes, and all of 'em—with poisoned pens in their hands—sworn upon a sheet of foolscap not faithfully to report the speeches of Captain Gordon and the Rev. Hugh Stowell, and such great men as speak for the Protestant cause.

Tickle. I don't believe it. My true 'pinion is, that if the reporters really wanted to hurt the Protestant cause, they'd put down every syllable—just as it's said—that such talkers talk about it. It's my belief they couldn't do it worse service.

Peabody. Having read a good many of their speeches, I should certainly say that any alteration would better 'em.

Slowgoe. To be sure: I'd forgot I was talking to some folks no better than infidels. People who won't believe any wickedness of the Pope! For my part, I don't know where the religion's gone to. When I think of these reporters let loose about London—reporters, every one on 'em, as Mr Stowell would say, hatched from a cockatrice's egg, set upon in Trinity College for the purpose—every one full of quills as a porkipine, going to Exeter Hall and the Horns Tavern, and, for what I know, the Bull and Mouth, and the Belle Savage——

Peabody. Beg your pardon—*Belle Sauvage.*

Slowgoe. I know that; but who'd stop for pronunciation when the Church is in danger? When,

I say, I see 'em all with their drawn quills at such meetings, they do seem to me no better than 'sassins with daggers ready to stick at nothing but Protestant 'Scendancy.

Mrs Nutts. My stars! and——

Nutts. Mrs Nutts, stars will do.

Mrs Nutts. Well, I can't speak without being taken up! I was only going to ask what was to be done against such creturs—going with drawn daggers among peaceable people?

Nosebag. Why, nothing. (*Feeling his chin and rising.*) A very clean shave, indeed; got a chin like white satin. Why, nothing can be done—nothing.

Slowgoe. No; because we want a minister with wigour. But I'd stop it, I would. Yes; for I wouldn't let a single reporter into any meeting 'somever that didn't—as members of Parliament used to do when England was worth living in—that didn't renounce the Pope and all his works; and Captain James Gordon, with two drawn swords at the door, should 'minister the oath.

Nosebag. Well, I don't know. I'm not a Papish myself—never shall be—but——

Mrs Nutts. Just as I said to Mrs Biggleswade over the way—"My dear," says I, "they might tear me to bits with wild Arabian horses, and they wouldn't get my religion out of me."

Slowgoe. Very proper, ma'am; I'm delighted to

hear you. I will say this, you're worthy of Smithfield in its best days.

Nosebag. But I was going to say, this new Pope seems a fine old chap. Doing all sorts of good. I've heard that he's set up a *Penny Roman Magazine*—and has, with his own hands, turned I don't know how many sods for railways—and let perlitical people out of prison, and——

Slowgoe. Yes, yes; we know Rome before this. All a blind. People who know anything, know that very well. Why, there isn't an Italian boy that sells images—and I suppose you've heard that Dr Pusey and Dr Newman are coming out in Roman cement, at sixpence a-head, for mantelpieces?—there isn't, I say, an Italian image-boy as doesn't expect to hear the Pope say High Mass in Westminster Abbey.

Mrs Nutts. Not possible!

Slowgoe. Mrs Nutts, though I honour you for what you've said about the Arab horses, nevertheless you don't know Rome. Why, the Pope will come to England, just as Ibrahim Parker did, to see—that'll be the excuse—our works and manufactures. He'll be asked to take a snack at Oxford, in course. And then when he's seen all the sights—and p'r'aps given Madame Tussaud a sittin' for her waxwork—he'll just go off softly in a cab to Westminster Abbey, pay his money at

the door, as if nothing was the matter, and then quietly walk in. Now I'm not an alarmist—I should be sorry if I was—but with the Pope once well inside Westminster Abbey, who do you think is to get him out agin?

Mrs Nutts. To be sure. And for what I know, he'd turn us all into nuns; but I know what I'd do—I'd die first!

Nutts. No doubt on it, Mrs Nutts. But what a comfort, my love, that they'd allow you the preference. Shouldn't wonder, Slowgoe, if they didn't make you a cardinal.

Peabody. Yes; Cardinale Lentopasso. Rome has certainly seen her Slowgoes in her day. The Lentopasso——

Mrs Nutts. Now, Mr Peabody, none of your Greek, if you have been a schoolmaster.

Peabody. The Lentopasso is a very old name in the Church. The family crest is a snail proper chewing opium.

Mrs Nutts. The nasty creturs! But just like 'em.

Tickle. (*With paper.*) So they're going to make the Duchess of Marlborough pay a fine for shooting her husband's pheasants. Rather hard, isn't it; a wife not allowed to kill her husband's game?

Mrs Nutts. But it's all done to lower marriage—all done to make little of the weddin'-ring. I'm sure I wonder they don't alter the marriage service.

Talking about flesh of flesh, and bones of bones, and a lawful married woman is to take out a stamp to shoot at what belongs to her! What do you say to that, Mr Slowgoe?

Slowgoe. Why, really, Mrs Nutts, I've a great respect for any duchess—nevertheless, the game-laws is, I must say it, a solemn matter; mustn't be tampered with because of the vulgar. If duchesses will insist upon using powder—I mean, in course, gunpowder—they must be properly authenticated so to do.

Nutts. But if ladies will shoot—if the taste's coming up that way—why don't they shirk the licence, and sport with poultry? Aren't there hens, and ducks, and geese to be killed for the kitchen? I don't see why the fashion shouldn't go up from chickens to bullocks.

Tickle. Talking about shooting, I see Prince Albert shot a whole swarm of rabbits at Virginny Water on Monday—rabbits that was sent (*reads paper*) “to Mr Humphries of Egham, the contractor for the purchase of all rabbits killed in the home and great parks.” Isn't that droll?—for the Queen's husband to sell rabbits?

Slowgoe. There you go with your sneering disloyalty agin. Not at all droll, for there isn't one of them rabbits that won't be turned into a beef-steak or a mutton-chop.

Mrs Nutts. La! how do you mean?

Slowgoe. Why, in this way. The money that Mr Humphries gives for 'em will, of course, be laid out upon butcher's-meat, and at Christmas be distributed to the Windsor poor!

Nutts. Shouldn't have any objection to all the game in the world, if it could be so transmogrified. A pheasant shan't be disgraced with ribs of beef for a proxy.

Tickle. So the Court, I see, is gone to Osborne House, in the Isle of Wight.

Slowgoe. As a loyal subject, that Isle of Wight makes me very uneasy. To be sure, it's rather near to Portsmouth; nevertheless, when the war breaks out——

Nosebag. And I'm told it's whizzing up in France like a gingerbeer-cork with the string cut.

Slowgoe. When it goes off, 'twouldn't at all surprise me if that Joynveal was to 'tack the Isle of Wight, and Osborne House in 'special. I must say it, I should sleep easier with the thoughts of a handful of forty-pounders there. A battery or two would help to set my mind at rest.

Tickle. The Queen and the Prince, they do say, have gone down to see about the planting, and not the guarding, of the place—planting it with trees.

Peabody. What a very pretty picture! Her

Gracious Majesty dropping acorns in the earth.
Britannia sowing her own oaks.

Tickle. Dear soul! And let us hope she'll live
to see a flourishing crop of three-deckers.

Nutts. There goes one o'clock. Pig's ready.
Can't shave another hair. . (*Runs out.*)

Mrs Nutts. There! I told you all so. A man
with a wife and family, and yet sich a headstrong
cretur of crackling!





CHAPTER XV.

NUTTS. *In his circle.*

SLOWGOE. (*With newspaper.*) Pretty quiet, I see, about this Cracow business.

Nutts. Why, yes; when kings choose to break into towns, it's what we may 'nominate burglary made easy. Heads may do anything, if they happen to be anointed, as you call it; for then they've been made so slippery, Justice can't catch hold of 'em.

Slowgoe. Mr Nutts, you're incurable. Justice is very well for people like us; but when it comes to emperors and kings—why, then, you see the scales of Justice——

Nutts. I know; not big enough for royal transactions. Justice may keep a chandler's shop in the Old Bailey, to serve out penn'orths to poor people——

Nosebag. And sometimes cruel hard penn'orths, too.

Nutts. But she hasn't weights heavy enough for wholesale work. She can't weigh cities and towns, and thousands of men, women, and children, for royal customers. There's no place sufficiently large in this world for her to set up her scales in.

Peabody. Why, no ; perhaps not in this world. But heaven's big enough, Mr Nutts ; and there's a destiny, they tell us, that weighs mountains.

Slowgoe. Now none of your irreligion, Mr Peabody. If the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria and of Russia——

Tickle. Well, I'd a droll dream about them a night or two ago. I'd been reading a police case and fell asleep, and I dreamt that I saw the three of 'em, with their crowns upon their heads, put into a police-van. And then I thought I saw a policeman in a coat of blue fire—no reflections on you, Mr Peabody—jump upon the steps, and heard him bang to the door, and cry out with a jolly loud voice, "*All right, NEWGATE!*"

Slowgoe. Well, I'm not a cruel person ; but if order's to be at all respected, I'd hang any man for dreaming a dream like that.

Tickle. And then I thought the three crowned heads—and how often has Fortin crowned where she ought to have bonneted !—the three crowned heads was put upon a cast-iron treadmill ; and as they went up and up, it grew warmer and warmer, till at last it was red-hot.

Slowgoe. If this conversation is continued I must leave the shop.

Tickle. And then, after a little while, I thought I saw the crowned heads put upon a bench pickin' oakum—no; it was a lot of little snakes in knots which the crowned heads couldn't separate; and which the more they was picked the more they stung—and didn't the crowned heads all blow and blow, as if they'd well burnt their precious fingers!

Mrs Nutts. Don't talk in that way, Mr Tickle; it isn't like a Christian; 'specially with such company as kings. For after all, poor things! they mayn't know better.

Nutts. And after all—I do confess it—since I've seen Prince Albert's pigs at the cattle-show, I do feel a greater respect for all sorts of royalty.

Tickle. Well, I must say it, and I don't mean any joke, but in the respect that's got from prize pigs there must be a good deal of gammon.

Slowgoe. Here's the account (*reads*): "Pigs of any breed, above twenty-six and under fifty-two weeks old.—H.R.H. Prince Albert, of Windsor Castle, a pair of three forty-one-weeks-old Bedfordshire pigs, bred by H.R.H. and fed on corn, meal, milk, and potatoes.—Second prize, £5."

Mrs Nutts. And you can't think it, Mr Slowgoe, such loves! I could have nursed 'em!

Nutts. I own it; loyalty seemed to steal all over me as I looked at 'em. I confess the weakness, but had my country been on one side, and them pigs on the other, I should have been a traitor in the cause of pork.

Mrs Nutts. As I said to Mrs Biggleswade over the way—for she went with us; the poor soul! like me, it isn't often she gets out from that brute her—but never mind—as I said to Mrs Biggleswade, “My dear, this is the Prince's pork, and they don't look like common vulgar pigs, do they?” And they didn't; they looked as white as if they'd been washed with the best scented Windsor soap, and dried upon damask. “My dear,” whispered Mrs Biggleswade to me, and I could see something was passing in her mind—“My dear, them's the Prince's pigs! Well, I feel so affected, I could kiss 'em.”

Tickle. Not bad things, I daresay, to put your lips to, when roasted.

Mrs Nutts. Ha! There was something in 'em. They wasn't at all common pigs, I tell you. Fed on corn, and milk, and potatoes! Under the Prince's own eye, too! only think, wasn't that something to consider, as the sweet things lay grunting—for they was too fat to stand—grunting afore you?

Slowgoe. Mrs Nutts, I must honour your principles. To a loyal mind, it must be impossible to

look upon those pigs, and not feel there was a perfume, as it were, of royalty about 'em.

Nutts. I can't say about that: when I looked at 'em, I seemed to smell nothin' but sage and onions.

Mrs Nutts. Don't talk in that way, Nutts. It appears to me wicked to think of eating 'em: all the while I looked at 'em, they seemed to take me nearer to his Royal Highness. And so it seemed with a good many other ladies; I'm sure there wasn't one of us that would have begrudged her golden ear-rings to put in their precious noses.

Tickle. Women are such devoted creturs—especially when there's princes in the way. To throw ear-rings to pigs! Well, what next?

Mrs Nutts. Ha! but they wasn't at all like common pigs, I tell you—so genteel; not at all like other pork. In a minute you could see they were pigs of high breedin'; for they lay upon their sides, with their noses a-restin' on the troughs, doing nothin'. They wouldn't try to take the trouble to look at us; they was so fat they couldn't open their eyes theirselves, when a young man—to oblige us—with his finger and thumb opened 'em for 'em. And Mrs Biggleswade and me both agreed, that for pig's eyes, they were the sweetest blue we ever see.

Tickle. Ha! This comes o' being fattened on royal milk, and filled with royal potatoes. Jest

like you women. If a great man was to bring up a prize donkey, you'd swear it was the finest zebra; and, for what I know, wear thistles in your caps and bonnets in honour of the animal. If the Prince's pigs were to be bled into black puddings, what a scramble there would be to buy the delicacy!

Mrs Nutts. There now, Mr Tickle, I don't want to hear your heathen discourse. If I was to look upon such puddin's—coming from the Prince's sty—as the blood royal, what's that to you? And if Mr Nutts was like any other man—which he isn't—he'd hardly hear his wife talked to in this manner. And then, Mr Slowgoe—not but what the pigs carry away the bell with me—then you should have only seen the Prince's heifer!

Slowgoe. Here it is, I see (*reads*): "EXTRA STOCK.—Cattle.—H. R. H. Prince Albert, of Windsor Castle, a two-years-and-eleven-months-old Highland Scot and Durham heifer, bred by Mr Milnes, Downham, Norfolk, and fed on cake, meal, hay, *Swedes*, and mangold-wurzel! travelled to the show on foot nine miles, and by railway twenty-two miles.—Silver medal." Now, does the medal, I wonder, go to the Prince or to Mr Milnes?

Mrs Nutts. To Mr Milnes, indeed! Like his impudence! To Prince Albert, of course; and I

should hope on state days and drawing-rooms, and so forth, he'll wear it.

Tickle. No objection to that at all. As there's the Order of the Golden Fleece, and the Order of the Elephant, and suchlike—given to statesmen and soldiers, very often for swindling and killing one another—eh, Mr Peabody? you're a scholar, and know all about it—I don't see why at these cattle-shows there shouldn't be the Order of the Ox—the Order of the Steer—the Order of the Ram—the Order of the Wether Sheep—the Order of the China Pig—and the Order of the Pig of Any Breed.

Peabody. Why not? With Knights Companions of Oilcake, Mangold - Wurzel, Buckwheat, and Barleymeal? I don't see why a very pretty sort of heraldry might not be got up of prize cattle; much wiser and more serviceable, after all, to mankind, than the prize Unicorns and prize Griffins won upon battle-fields. Then, as for the shedding of blood, I don't think that's the best sort that grows us laurels; but that *that* runs to black puddings.

Nutts. Well, of the two, I know which does the least mischief, and gives the wholesomest bellyful. And as there's a good many of the aristocracy—by-the-by, you can't think what a while I was mustering that word, but I've got hold of him at last—as the aristocracy go in every year for a show

of fat, I shouldn't wonder to see the day come when medals for killing men, and, as Mr Tickle says, for swindling 'em in cabinets, haven't all the shine taken out of 'em by the medals of cattle-shows.

Peabody. Very true, Mr Nutts. Put a case now. There is M. Bresson : I believe he has had bestowed upon him the Order of the Golden Fleece.

Nosebag. What was the beginnin' of that Order?

Peabody. To reward the flaying of a whole people! Well, Mons. Bresson has the Fleece because he kidnapped that little girl—the Infanta—as a daughter-in-law for Louis Philippe. Poor little Merino Lamb! the Fleece had a meaning in it, as payment for such work. Nevertheless, when the Frenchman walks with it about his neck—as though he carried a star out of heaven under his chin—do you think, all matters considered, the Order is as honest a looking thing—as honourable to him who carries it, and as serviceable to the world, as the gold medal given to—here it is (*reads*)—to “Mr J. Painter of Burley, near Oakham, Rutland” for “a pen of three twenty-one-months-old new Leicester wethers”? Tell me that, Mr Slowgoe.

Tickle. I should think not : that's something like Fleece, that is ; and the wethers were fed upon good honest corn, and meal, and pulse, I'll be

bound—while for the poor little Spanish girl, I wonder what sort of promise the Frenchman crammed her with, that made her a Prize Bride, and so rewarded him with the Prize Order.

Nosebag. But after all—though I've stuck the bills, as I may say, taken money of the cattle—after all, it does seem to me a flying in the face of plenty, to fatten 'em, not for the food of Christians, but for soap and candles. I'm sartin on it—for I walked round and looked at all on 'em—there was half-a-dozen oxen there that was so fat they seemed quite disconcerted o' themselves. And the poor creturs seemed to look at some o' their owners as much as to say, "We wonder you aint ashamed o' yourselves to spile our figures in this fashion; to pad us—and all in the wrong places—with tallowy fat; and to take all the shape and make out of us innocent unsuspecting oxen, as if we was nothin' more than churchwardens or city aldermen."

Mrs Nutts. Nonsense! I'm sure the poor creturs had no such stuff in their heads. And for the royal pigs—if they'd been emperors, they couldn't have sprawled about more at their ease, and seemed more full and happy. They knew what was what, and never had their noses out of the troughs.

Nutts. I should like to know who'll buy 'em. Nobody can call me a worshipper of rank and fortin,

and that sort of thing, but I should like to know who 'll buy them pigs, and when they 'll cook 'em.

Limpy. What can it matter to you, Nutts, who 'll cook the Prince's pigs?

Nutts. 'Twould be a satisfaction, that's all. Them pigs have taken such a hold on me, I'd go ten mile to walk up and down by the kitchen window to smell 'em roastin'.

Peabody. Well, the pigs—for they 've been spoilt, as things very often are, brought up in their walk of life—the pigs are sensible creatures, for all that; and if you 'd have heard them really talk as I did on Tuesday night——

All. Talk!

Peabody. Talk. I'll tell you how it was. I was on duty at the show, walking about among the cattle all night—at least nearly all night; for I sat down on a bench at about twelve—for a minute after I heard the church clock strike. At that very moment, who should I see rise up out of a heap of straw but a short thick-set man, with a large head bossed like a huge potato. I knew him at once by his looks and his garment—it was Æsop.

Nosebag. I don't believe a syllable about it; but who is Æsop?

Nutts. Well, Mr Nosebag! I never did hear such ignorance; if I don't feel ashamed of myself

that ever I shaved you. Did you never see a spellin'-book? Wasn't he the intimate friend of the birds, and the beasts, and the fishes, and hasn't he told us all they talked about? Didn't he write the story of the Lion and the Mouse?

Mrs Nutts. And Cock Robin? But go on, Mr Peabody—never mind Nosebag. Some people are so wicked they won't believe nothin'! Go on. Wasn't you afeard?

Peabody. Just at first. But there was such a look of true good-nature—and true wisdom, Mrs Nutts, is always good-natured—in Æsop's face; such a look, I may say, of pleasant benignity, that in a moment I ceased to be afraid of the thing as a ghost, and stood bolt upright, and took my hat off—though it's not required by the rules of the "force"—as to a teacher and a friend.

Slowgoe. Well, I shall begin to have some hopes of you, after all. I didn't think you'd show such a respect for ghosts. I'm glad you're not quite lost to the wisdom of our ancestors. I have lived to hear the ghosts of Cock Lane doubted; but—I confess it—it's positively comforting to hear you talk as you do of Æsop. A great man! I should like to know what wisdom we've had since he lived? Why, nothing new: it's been the old thing served up, like a cold joint hashed with ketchup, and kayenne, and all that.

Mrs Nutts. And very good eatin', too, Mr Slowgoe ; but go on, Mr Peabody. What did Æsop say when he saw you ?

Peabody. Nothing to me at all ; he merely smiled and nodded, and kept all his discourse for the cattle. Well, it was very odd, but in a minute every four-footed thing seemed to know the presence of their great interpreter, Æsop.

Nosebag. How could they see him ? Was the gas burning ?

Tickle. Not at all. But don't you know it's a rule with ghosts always to appear with their own lights ?

Peabody. All's one for that. I tell you they all knew him : and the heaviest oxen there, though wellnigh broken-backed with fat, rose upon its four legs ; and its loose velvety skin seemed to quiver and wrinkle with pleasure ; and its eyes glowed with a mild and almost human light ; and it bent its head in token of veneration and acknowledgment of the immortal Æsop. And the sheep—those packs of breathing wool—they softly baaed, and shook their tails ; and——

Mrs Nutts. And the pigs ? — the Prince's pigs ?

Peabody. They couldn't fail to support the dignity of their breeding, and made more noise to welcome even the ghost of genius than all the

rest; indeed it was delightful, wonderful, to see how the great master was acknowledged.

Mrs Nutts. And didn't he say a syllable to you?

Peabody. Not a word: there was better company for him. But he walked from class to class, and from pen to pen; and as he looked upon the misshapen mountains of vitality, he shook his head, and, with a mild melancholy upon his face, heaved a frequent sigh.

Nutts. Not to be wondered at; he was always such a friend to pigs.

Peabody. At last the ghost paused close beside a four-year-old Hereford steer. It had won the first prize and a silver medal. "How are you?" said Æsop, laying his hand upon the beast. "Choking; wellnigh gone," answered the steer. "Did you ever see such a beast as I am in all your days? And this is what the stupidity and vaingloriousness of man have brought me to!" "Foolish wretch!" cried Æsop, "how was it you gorged so much? Couldn't you restrain your appetite?" "Impossible!" said the steer. "I had taken no temperance pledge against oil-cake: I hadn't vowed to keep to grass, with now and then a mouthful of turnips; no. And so when they put the cake, and the mangold-wurzel, and the Swedes, and the meal, and the cabbages

before me, I did no more than what men do with port and sherry, and brandy and gin, upon the table: I took all I could swallow, though I felt I was making a greater beast of myself every minute." "Poor wretch!" said Æsop again; "however, I'm glad you feel the degradation. Still, there's one comfort for you—yes, one consolation; like a glutton and wine-drinker with gout in his stomach, you'll die a prize beast." "As for dying," said the steer, in a small asthmatic voice—"As for dying—but I beg your pardon, great Æsop!—would you allow me to lie down in your presence? for I feel my legs are cracking under my fat." Æsop, with his old benevolence, nodded assent; and the poor beast, after much wheezing and groaning laid itself down again, and resumed its talk. "As for dying, life's a burden to me; and I'm sure of it, I shall smile at the butcher. You can't think I've any comfort in the gluttony that's been forced upon me. As for this stalling and over-feeding, what is it all to a sweet rational mouthful of summer grass, with now and then a cabbage or two, a gentle walk about the pastures, and at the heat of noon a foot-bath in the pond, away from the flies under the shade of a willow? That's wholesome life; and makes good, honest beef—beef that's a credit to the plum-pudding and horse-radish. And now I've a

whole tallow-chandler's stock upon my ribs and back, and the taste of unprofitable fat in my mouth. Look at me," and the animal languidly flourished its tail—"Look at me, you who know what steers and oxen ought to be, and say if nature isn't outraged and violated in my person. I'm at the best a filthy unnatural curiosity—a monster fattened by the conceit of man—and not a decent beast fit for a decent table. I'm a mountain, and not a comely animal."

Tickle. Well, upon my life! a very sensible beast indeed.

Peabody. Don't interrupt me. "Well," says Æsop, shaking his head, "I'm not given to compliments; and I must say it, you are a fat, filthy, nasty-looking beast indeed. And then, again, how much respectable beef might have been bred and properly fattened with the food that has been thrown away—for it's no better—upon you!"

Tickle. And I should like to know what the brute had to answer to that.

Peabody. Why, though its heart was in walls of fat, the reproach of Æsop went right through to it. It rolled, and kicked, and lowed, and at last, somehow, the tears running out of its eyes, it cried, "Don't, don't; there's my remorse. I knew that there were whole herds of beasts somewhere that would have been bettered by the superfluity

that was crammed down my throat; but the fact is, I had lived so long and intimately with man, that I had fallen into his greatest vice, and overgorged myself with what would have comforted others." And then again the prize beast lowed, and its compunction seemed terrible; and in this way Æsop went from prize beast to prize beast—to steers, to oxen and heifers, and sheep.

Nutts. And pigs?

Peabody. And pigs.

Mrs Nutts. And tell me, what did the Prince's pigs say? Surely they didn't bewail their fat to Æsop.

Peabody. All in the same manner as the steer; and one of the pigs in special said this, "They've over-fattened me, made my life a burden, and now they'll kill me. Still I have this revenge; for be assured, whoever eats a morsel of me—if it's hours afterwards—I'll do nothing but rise upon him.





CHAPTER XVI.

NUTTS. (*Stropping razor.*) Happy new year to ye, my friends.

Tickle. Hallo, Nutts! Why, what's the matter with the shop? As fine and as shiny, and smelling as sweet as Covent Garden! Well, I'm sure! If you haven't brought a bit of Bond Street to Seven Dials! What's it all about?

Nutts. Nothing. Merely treating the new year like a gentleman. That's all. I've turned over a new leaf.

Mrs Nutts. That's the old story, Mr Tickle. For these ten years and more, Nutts has always turned over a new leaf. Mighty fine. But afore the year's a week old, see if he doesn't turn the new leaf back again. All his new leaves are very soon old dog's-ears. Just like the men.

Noscbag. Shouldn't ha' known the shop agin. New rush-bottoms to the chairs, all the cracked

windows mended, and what—remarkable—nice sand upon the floor!

Nutts. Why, you see, when Time's brushing up all the world for a new beginning, it's nothin' more than right to treat him with a little ceremony, when Time himself starts with a clean shave on the first of January.

Slowgoe. Well, for my part, I thought Time never shaved.

Nutts. Quite a vulgar error, sir. As the clock strikes twelve on the thirty-first of December, he takes up his scythe, which is Time's razor—and what that's stopp'd upon 'twould make a man's fortin to find out, for what cuts like it, I should wish to know?—well, he takes up his scythe, and holding himself by the nose, begins the operation.

Slowgoe. What! in the dark? and without a glass?

Peabody. Not at all. His glass is the Frozen Ocean, and he shaves by the Northern Lights.

Nutts. (*Aside to Peabody.*) Thank'ee, Mr P. You've helped me well out of *that*, like a gentleman with a scholar. Consider that I owe you a shave. Why, at this moment, 1847—like a new-born babby—Time hasn't a hair on his chin. No; I consider him a nice smart young chap, with a very clean face—a very straight back—a merry twinkle in his eye—a sprig of green holly in his

mouth—and quite ready to draw, wherever he's invited, for Twelfth-ŕake—and dance with all women afterwards.

Mrs Nutts. Yes, that's your notion of Time; and a married man, too! All very well; but I don't see that Time's any reason to look so smart, and go dancing about with anybody but his own wife—and that, too, when his bills for last year aint paid.

Nutts. (*Aside to Peabody.*) Now isn't that like 'em, Mr P.? The worst of a wife is she always goes for realities. It isn't an opinion to put forth to the world, but my notion is that romance—like brandy—was only made for man. Sometimes when I'm up in the clouds, a-going here and a-fly-ing there, and doing I don't know what—well, at that moment, that good woman there—the wife of my busum—says somethin', and down I drop in a lump, like a dead eagle with a bullet in his belly.

Mrs Nutts. Not very good manners, Mr Nutts, I think, to the rest of your customers—to keep a-muttering there to Mr Peabody. But I suppose *that's* one of your new leaves.

Nutts. Was only asking him, my dear, if Time—like some of the linen-drapers—didn't sometimes shave the ladies. And Mr Peabody said there could be no doubt on 't, you did look this new year so fresh and blooming.

Mrs Nutts. Mr Peabody, though disgised as a policeman, as I may say, *is* a gentleman.

Nosebag. Always was, from a child. Heyday! Why, Nutts, how smart the cats look, too!—both on 'em, Whig and Tory. Spick - and - span new collars!

Nutts. Yes; poor brutes! Couldn't do less, you see. Parliament meets on the nineteenth, and out o' special compliment to what's called its wisdom—and considerin' it's the new year—I've given 'em collars. Whig looks rather serous, doesn't he?

Tickle. Well, I must say there is a sort of thoughtful look about his whiskers. He *does* get very like Lord John, somehow.

Nutts. Poor fellow! There is rayther a few mice to catch for him, isn't there?

Slowgoe. Well, Tory's the cretur for my money. Really a beautiful animal, and a credit to any house.

Nutts. Why, she has been, to say the hard and serous truth, a very devil in her time. But she's old, very old, and wheezy now. Teeth's nearly gone, and claws worn to the stumps. Here, Tory, Tory! Look at her, poor old cretur! All she can do now is to purr; she hasn't strength enough in her for a good squall of the good old times. Talking of the likeness of Whig and Lord John—do now just observe that Tory; all in a lump of

cosy fur, with her eyes half-shut, and her head a leetle on one side, is she not the very spit of the late lamented Lord Eldon?

Slowgoe. (*Rising.*) So early in the year I should not like to quarrel. No; I should not like to be forced out of the shop. But I cannot, as an Englishman who sticks to his institutions, hear that animal compared to a reverend Lord Chancellor. What! liken catskin to the spotless ermine?

Tickle. Ecod! Considering what ermine's sometimes done, there hasn't been much difference between 'em.

Limpy. What, Nutts! Got more cats? A big 'un and, yes, five kittens!

Nutts. Yes; that's Charter and the Five Pints. My wife—jest like the Whigs—wanted to drown all the five afore they could see. They're not very strong; a little back'ard, it must be owned, jest yet; but shouldn't wonder if some on 'em don't catch mice some day. Here—as Parliament's going to begin, I bought another, what I call, a party, yesterday. Here—here! (*Whistles.*)

Nosebag. Why, it's a dog, a turnspit; and, I declare, quite a puppy.

Nutts. Yes; that's Young England.

Slowgoe. A most intelligent, beautiful little animal. That's the only dog I care for, for that's a dog that reminds me of what England was in her

good old times of hospitality : in those happy days when there were no smoke-jacks, or any such new-fangled inventions to roast good honest English beef with ; nothing but a national animal like that to sit upon his faithful hind legs, and turn and turn the noble surloin. Ha ! there's no such beef now.

Tickle. But I say, Nutts, you don't make Young England there turn your spit, do you ?

Nutts. Lor' bless you ! no. Still, somehow, the thing's bred in the cretur ; for whenever missus hangs down a jint to roast, doesn't Young England get as close as he can to it ? and then sitting up and begging like, doesn't he look with one eye upon the meat as it browns, and the other on the sops in the pan ?

Slowgoe. A very clever dog, no doubt.

Nutts. Why, yes ; he can understand sops in the pan as well as any on 'em.

Limpy. And how does he and the cats agree ?

Nutts. Why, middlin'. Whig spits and sets up her back at him, and won't be friends nohow. Poor old Tory dozes away, and rayther likes him ; whilst Charter seems to treat him with silent contempt ; and the little Five Pints play with his tail as if it was no more than my wife's thread-paper.

Slowgoe. Just like the lower orders. No respect for real rank.

Nutts. I haven't thought much of any of the creturs lately ; but I assure you, when Parliament 'sembles I shall keep my eye as sharp as a needle's pint upon 'em. In the meanwhile, gentlemen, considerin' this is the new year, if you will take so short a notice, I shall be proud to see you, your wives and sweethearts, to a dance in the shop to-morrow night, which, somehow or the other, we'll manage to enlarge for the occasion.

Slowgoe. I've no objection, for one. But mind, none of your fangled brass stuff, your *cornets-a-piston*, and all that. Let's have a good English fiddle and a constitutional clarionet. And none of your quodrilling, and polkys ; but a straightforward country-dance, and a legitimate four-handed reel. And mind, none of your fellars from the orchestra of the opera : if there's a foreigner here with moustachers, I take my hat.

Nutts. No objection, I hope, to a Scotch bagpipe and an Irish harp?

Slowgoe. Why, no.

Nutts. Very well, you shall have 'em ; and more than that, a hornpipe danced to 'em in character, by a young gentleman who lives at Mrs Biggleswade's over the way, and goes on in one of the pantomimes as the "British Lion."

Mrs Nutts. He's promised me to come in his skin, and I'm sure it will be beautiful.

And for awhile turning from the fierceness of politics, raging all the year round in Nutts' shaving-shop, it *was* beautiful to see how Nutts and the customers, with wives and sweethearts, danced on New-Year's night. Mr Nutts led off Mrs Biggleswade from over the way ; the hornpipe of the "British Lion" was danced to admiration ;—and, in the full flush of the festivity, it is said that Mr Peabody, the scholarly policeman, furtively saluted Mrs Nutts, when that unsuspecting woman stood immediately beneath the mistletoe. This, however, could hardly be, since the very next morning Mrs Nutts herself declared to Mrs Biggleswade over the way, "that that Mr Peabody was too good for the police ; he was such a gentleman."





CHAPTER XVII.

NUTTS, *with his usual customers.*

SLOWGOE. (*With newspaper.*) So Parliament's at it in earnest now.

Nutts. Yes; they've opened Solomon's brass kettle at last.

Slowgoe. What do you mean by Solomon's kettle?

Nutts. And did you never read the "'Rabian Nights," where they fish up from the sea the brass kettle with Solomon's seal upon it? A kettle thought to be crammed with wisdom, and when it was opened there came out of it clouds and clouds of smoke?

Mrs Nutts. La! Nutts, how can you go on in that heathen way about Parliament, after what you saw on Tuesday? I'm a sinful woman, Mr Slowgoe, if he didn't keep me awake half the night talking of the Queen's stomacher and crown of diamonds. He talked on 'em in such a way, I almost thought I saw 'em in the room.

Nutts. Well, there 'd have been no want of the rushlight if you had.

Slowgoe. (Solemnly.) Why, you never mean to say, Mr Nutts, that you saw her Gracious Majesty on last Tuesday, with her crown upon her head, in the House of Lords?

Nutts. Saw all of it—heard all of it; but how I got into the House, why, that's a secret that even my tombstone shall tell to nobody. Splendid sight! I can tell you. I haven't got the light of the diamonds out of my eyes yet.

Tickle. Perhaps, then, you'll tell us a little about it?

Nutts. Well, then, you see, having got my ticket from my friend the Minister—ha! you don't know the private interest mixed up with shaving, after all—having got my ticket, I say, I drove down in a patent safety to the House of Lords, jest no more than if it was any other public-house I was in the habit of going to.

Limpy. The Bag o' Nails, or the Cat and Whistle?

Nutts. Just so. Human natur's weak, and—I confess it—as I went rolling along atween the rows of people waiting in the street, with their feet freezing to the flags, to catch a glance of the Queen through her carriage windows—I confess it, I did a little pity'em. Well, I went to the lobby, and there

was such a crowd! If I trod upon the toes of many peeresses, I hope I shall be forgiven for it. I squeezed into the House—and wasn't there a scramblin' for seats! You see, there was some benches that the ladies wanted to storm; but they wouldn't let 'em; they were kept for the Lords.

Mrs Nutts. No doubt on it. Jest like 'em.

Nutts. And how the ladies' voices did ring! You would have thought you heard all at once twenty thousand canary-birds. I expected every minute they 'd charge through the officers and carry the benches; indeed, I'm pretty sure they 'd have done it, when the sound of a trumpet tore through the House, and on a sudden they were as mute as mice.

Slowgoe. The trumpet meant her Gracious Majesty, of course?

Nutts. Not a bit on it: it only meant the Duke of Cambridge. Well, when he came in, he shook hands with a lot of lords, and seemed as happy as if he was at a prize cattle-show.

Slowgoe. If you're going to be profane, much as I want to hear the rest, I shall leave the shop. Tell your tale, and no revolutionary comparisons. Who else did you see?

Nutts. Why, all the 'bassadors; and among 'em the French Ambassador, looking as if nothing had happened, and the Spanish Princess was still a

spinster. But, bless your heart! it's only folks that can look anything, that are chose for 'bassadors. And then there was such clouds of lawn!

Nosebag. What do you mean by clouds of lawn?

Nutts. Why, bishops, to be sure. They looked very noble, very fine, for certain; and yet, somehow, to my mind, their robes didn't seem to fit well in with the scarlet and gold, and velvet and other finery. To my mind, the pictur would have been quite as well without 'em.

Slowgoe. You're determined that I shall leave the shop.

Nutts. That's optional, of course. And then there was the judges, kivered so with ermine as if they'd come wild into the world with the fur upon 'em. And then there was their long wigs of justice—though why justice, like an armchair, should be always covered with horse-hair, I never could find out. And then, again, there was such a heap of lords.

Slowgoe. Ha! the flowers of the world! The lilies that neither toil nor spin!

Nutts. Oh! don't they though? If you'd have heard some of 'em, as I did, afterwards, you'd own they did spin, and precious long yarns, too.

Slowgoe. I hope nothing will happen to you, Mr Nutts; but go on.

Nutts. On a sudden the Park guns banged, and the peercesses jumped, and the colour came to their cheeks, and their eyes sparkled, and they looked at their bibs and tuckers to see that all was right—nothin' rumpled about 'em—for they know'd by the gunpowder that the Queen was comin'.

Mrs Nutts. That must have been a minute!

Nutts. It was more than a minute—seven or eight, perhaps; and then I don't know how many trumpets went off with such flourishes, as if they wound in and out every corner of you—and everybody seemed to say to everybody, "Hush! she's comin'."

Mrs Nutts. I'm sure I should have fainted.

Nutts. Not unlikely; you're weak enough for anything. But don't interrupt me. Well, in a minute the procession begins. The Earl of Zetland comes in first, carrying what's called the Cup of Maintenance.

Nosebag. What's the meaning of that?

Nutts. Why, it means taxes to maintain the Government. After him comes the Duke of Wellington with the Sword of State. And when I saw it, I couldn't help it, but I thought to myself, "Well, we human creturs are a rum lot, when we make the thing that sheds blood the sign of human glory."

Slowgoe. (Jumping up.) No; I'm determined! I will not stay in the shop.

Nutts. Don't; but don't interrupt me. Then comes Lord Lansdowne, carrying the Crown on a cushion—like a baby on a pillow—very careful and steady, as it was right to be, for fear of spillin' it. Then comes the Queen herself, glistening with diamonds, as if she 'd walked out of the centre of the sun——

Mrs Nutts. Oh! them diamonds!

Nutts. Along with Prince Albert. And then they took their seats in two chairs of state—and an empty one that's waiting till he grows to fill it, was beside the Queen to signify the Prince of Wales. And then the Queen in the politest way desired the Peers to take their seats and make themselves comfortable, which they know'd how to do directly. And then the House of Commons came scramblin' to the bar, a good many of 'em like very big schoolboys. And then the Queen read the Speech, and read it beautiful; for her voice seems as sweet and clear as melted sugar-candy. For my part, I never before heard such a voice.

Mrs Nutts. There, that will do, Mr Nutts. Of course; everybody before your own wife.

Nutts. And when the Queen read about Ireland, she read it out as if there was tears in her throat;

but when she came to the Spanish match and the Cracow burglary, she spoke up, and her lip shook a little, and there was the smallest tint, no bigger than a single rose-leaf, in both of her cheeks.

Slowgoe. Very proper. It does me good to hear it.

Tickle. And when the ceremony was all over, what now was your thoughts about it?

Nutts. Well, I'll tell you. For one moment afore the Queen arose, when I looked about me, and saw the officers of state, and the judges, and the bishops, and, above all, the beautiful women, all sparkle and all smiles, seeming angels, only with feathers in their heads and not at their backs—this thought dropped sudden on me, and all for the moment fell into shadow, for I thought, "What a thing is this to think of—*that all of you must die!*"

Slowgoe. There you are again! Always something bad to say of people above you!





CHAPTER XVIII.

NUTTS reading newspaper; customers drop in.

MRS NUTTS. Now, Mr Nutts; will you drag yourself out of that newspaper? I wish there wasn't such a thing in the world. I'm sure a man with his wife and family oughtn't to waste his time with newspapers.

Nutts. (*Laying down paper.*) Mrs Nutts—but I'm too melancholy to make a noise. Be quiet, my dear, can't you, and let me enjoy my wretchedness? How d'ye do, Slowgoe? Servant, Mr Peabody. If I should cut you all round to-day, let it go for nothing; for the fact is, the Chancellor's "Budget's" quite put my hand out of order.

Nosebag. Well, I haven't read it, but I've heard the pints. I did think to have a little more light in my back room, but now the 'tatoes have made it impossible. We're to have the window-tax still.

Slowgoe. I must confess it; not that I ever

expect anything from the Whigs—still I did look for some fall in soap. I thought washing might be made a little cheaper; but, as you say, Mr Nutts, the taxes keep us still in our dirt.

Peabody. And then in the matter of tea——

Mrs Nutts. What 's that about tea?

Nutts. Of course. Put politics in a teapot, and you women will listen to 'em directly. Why, the tea won't come down a halfpenny. And why not? Because of the 'tatoes. The potato's the real root of evil.

Peabody. And the first is—eight millions of money for Ireland. Eight millions more of debt to be laid upon the innocent shoulders of unborn babes.

Mrs Nutts. Dear little creturs!

Nutts. Still it can't be helped. As a policeman and once a schoolmaster, you must own this, Mr Peabody, the famishing must be fed.

Peabody. He's no better than a stone that denies it. Nevertheless, it is a little hard that for so many years there should be a running account of misery and profit between tenants and landlords; and at the last, when misery sinks to famine, we should be called on to make up the balance, pocketed years ago by others. There's a passage, I remember, in Mr Disraeli's—I don't mean young Benjamin's—"Curiosities," that's taken from a

sermon, and it runs somehow so : "If you ladies and gentlemen who are fattening on your pleasures, and wear scarlet clothes—I believe, if you were put in a good press, we should see the blood of the poor gush out with which your scarlet is dyed." Now, if a good many Irish landlords were squeezed after this fashion, their pockets would run scarlet too.

Nutts. Didn't Sir Walter Rawley bring potatoes from the New World? I thought so. 'Pon my life! when I think of it, they almost seem as if they'd been sent from the New World to revenge the wickedness she'd suffered from the Old. We made slaves with whips and chains; and the New World, waiting her time—for the wheel of right and wrong comes round, let it turn ever so slowly—makes slaves with potatoes. What do you think of that, Mr Peabody?

Peabody. Why, I think that Mr M'Neile, or any other of the illustrators of Providence—and pretty fiery pictures they've painted about it lately—wouldn't grudge half-a-crown for that thought. Why, he'd beat it into a discourse of an hour and a half long, and print and publish it for a shilling afterwards. *The Potato in its Iniquity!* Depend on it, Mr M'Neile would make a grand thing of it; showing that Irish landlords had nothing to do with the famine, but that the whole of the

potato blight was nothing more than the wickedness of Cortez and such fellows—all Catholics, be it remembered—coming up more than two hundred years afterwards. The rottenness of present potatoes no other than the whips and chains of bygone centuries coming to a head! There would be something grand in this. Whereas, to lay the blight upon the Maynooth Grant isn't worthy of the old woman who cursed the Pope for inventing the scarlet fever.

Nutts. Whatever brought the blight, I hope they 'll never trust to 'tatoes again. For my part, I shall never again think of fields of 'em in Ireland, without thinking every root a human slave: fields of misery, and want, and death. I've read somewhere of a certain root, that when men eat it they are turned to brutes: well, the potato's very like it; for, living upon nothing else, it takes the best part of a man clean out of him: it takes away his respect from himself; and when that's the case, a man's lost, and may as well go upon all fours at once. And then for the landlords——

Slowgoe. I will not sit any longer in the shop, and hear those worthy and most unfortunate gentlemen abused. As for the National Debt, as a lover of the institutions of my country, I'm bound to think it's a blessing.

Tickle. What! you don't think it a burden?

Slowgoe. Not at all. The National Debt is like the hump on a camel—it makes the State carry what it has to carry with greater convenience. (*Looking at paper.*) So they're going to make Prince Albert Chancellor of Cambridge. Mr Peabody, though you are now in the police, I believe last week you said you had a vote? Who do you give it to?

Peabody. *Nobody.* In the first place, I don't see how the Earl of Powis, being, on his own confession, not so wise a man as the Duke of Northumberland, can have the face to ask for it. And secondly, Prince Albert's intentions, should he be elected, are too military.

Nutts. What do you mean?—going to turn the students into soldiers?

Peabody. Not all at once; but it's generally reported, that if he's made Chancellor, he intends to abolish the trencher-cap at Cambridge University and bring in the Albert hat. I shouldn't wish it talked about, because it might lose the poor girl her place; nevertheless, the housemaid at Fulham told me of the fact, that on Thursday last she saw her master, the Bishop of London, trying on the Albert hat before the looking-glass.

Tickle. That's nothing; he might only be doing that as an officer—and I suppose a bishop would rank as lieutenant-colonel—in the Army of Mar-

tyrs. Talking of the Duke of Northumberland, I see he's been lying in state.

Slowgoe. Very right. Even in death people should respect their proper rank, and not come down to the vulgar. I see here's the account taken from the *Morning Herald*. Hark! (*Reads.*) "The noblest and most conspicuous town mansion of the nobility of this country is that which now bears the aspect of desolation, and betokens the chill presence of death. *The busy throng without pursue their wonted avocations around the princely pile* 'regardless of the dead:' within, all is darkness and pompous gloom." Beautiful, isn't it?

Peabody. Very good, hearselike literature, written with a black plume. But why shouldn't "the busy throng" go about their business? Would the gentleman have 'em stop and throng about the house? If so, and I'd been on duty, I am sure I should have said "Move on."

Slowgoe. Don't be profane, Mr Peabody. The gentleman is now in the chamber. (*Reads.*) "Eight enormous altar candles *vainly* attempted to dispel the gloom that *thickened* around the unconscious object of all this pomp, which was supported upon trestles, within an ebony railing, surmounted by eight *enormous plumes* of black ostrich feathers. The pall, of rich Genoa velvet, thrown partially aside, disclosed the coffin, *an*

unparalleled picce of art, covered with crimson velvet, and sumptuously mounted with massive gold ornaments, and a plate inscribed with the style and title of the Duke at great length." And this, the writer goes on beautifully to say, is all that remained of the "illustrious object."

Nutts. Well, he was a very decent man, I believe; but I never knew anything illustrious that he did. What made him illustrious—does anybody know?

Tickle. Why, the same thing that makes a weathercock illustrious—gold.

Nutts. And they call this "lying in state." "Ostrich feathers—Genoa velvet—and an unparalleled coffin." Well, when we think what coffins hold at the best, such a show is rightly named; it is "*Lying in State*," and nothing better.

Slowgoe. Of course you'll sneer, Mr Nutts; anything against the aristocracy. But I'm happy to say that the funeral was of corresponding splendour, and went off remarkably well. A great many of the ambassadors and nobility—though they didn't go themselves—in the very handsomest manner sent their carriages.

Nutts. Well, that's making woe easy, isn't it, when—poor things!—it's put upon the horses?

Tickle. (*With newspaper.*) I'm the veriest varmint, if the Church isn't really in danger now.

Slowgoe. What do you mean? How so?

Tickle. Why, here's Lord John Russell's word for it; he's going to make three more bishops. Manchester's to be the smallest; I suppose not exactly a fine lawn bishop, but a cotton one.

Slowgoe. Three more? I wish it was thirty.

Tickle. All the worse for the Church, then, I say again. Don't tell me. Poor old soul! When we think of the money her sons, the bishops, do get through—when we think of their palaces and their coaches—and their bankers' books—and their coal-mines and their sulphur-mines, for what I know—when we think of all this, and remember the precepts—I think they're so called—of Lady Church herself, I think her sons can't be called the most dutiful of children. On the contrary, I do believe they're getting the old lady every day into greater discredit; and where it will end, who shall say? Thus, it's my opinion—the more bishops, the more danger.

Nutts. I wonder if Mr Barry's had orders in the House of Lords to make seats for 'em.

Tickle. Oh, they're not to go to Parliament, says Lord John, "except as vacancies in the bench of bishops occur."

Slowgoe. I don't quite understand that. And I must confess it—whenever I see a Whig meddling with the Church, I feel as if I was looking at a cat

in a china-closet ; nobody can say what precious article mayn't be smashed.

Nutts. Perhaps his Lordship means that the bishops, like the soldiers, should take the House of Lords in turn ; mounting guard in the Church one after t' other.





CHAPTER XIX.

NOSEBAG comes in; at intervals, other customers.

NOSEBAG. Servant, Mrs Nutts. Where's the master?

Mrs Nutts. If you mean Mr Nutts, he's jest run with the pie to the bakehouse. I don't know how it is, but the older he grows, the more partic'lar he gets with his dinners. I am sorry to say it of my own husband, but I don't think an angel could make a crust to suit him now—for I try, I'm sure.

Nosebag. Well, nor I don't know how it is; but as we lose, as I heard a player say the other night—as we lose “the finer feelings of the 'art,” we seem to think more and more of wittles. Twenty years ago, when I was first married, I could have dined three days in the week on periwinkles; but I own it—I couldn't be happy on periwinkles now.

Mrs Nutts. Oh, in course not. I 'm sure I don't know who 'd be a poor woman, put upon as we are! Not a bit of power in our own hands—not so much as pie-crust left us.

Tickle. (*With newspaper.*) Well, really, Mrs Nutts—axing your pardon—I do sometimes think you have a little the whip-hand of us.

Mrs Nutts. I don't see how—I wish we had. We should know how to use it—we should.

Tickle. Why, see here now. Haven't you heard all about the Spanish dancer Donna Lola Montes and the old King of Bavaria?

Mrs Nutts. I don't want to hear anything about such creturs. What is it?

Tickle. Why, she 's doin' wonders. Taking the whole kingdom and whippin' it round like a top.

Nosebag. A most charmin' woman. She was here at the opera—don't I remember the bills? When the other lady dancers wouldn't dance with her—and screamed when they come nigh her—and when she went away, insisted upon having the house whitewashed, and vinegar and brown paper burnt in every corner. And then she went to Poland, where she stabbed the Emperor's own policeman; for she wears a dagger for a busk in her stays—don't you call 'em busks, Mrs Nutts?—in——

Mrs Nutts. There, go along; how should I know?

Stabbed him with a dagger, eh? Poor soul! and I daresay served him right. Well?

Tickle. Now she's got to Bavaria; and she makes no more of the King's crown than a thimble. And they do say that the old gen'l'man—that is, the King—though he's got a snow-white beard a foot long, is gone so raving mad about her that the unfortunate old man doesn't know the Queen, his own lawful wife.

Mrs Nutts. Nothing more likely.

Tickle. And more than that, Mrs Nutts; she's kicked over the Cabinet like a tea-table, and smashed the Ministry as if they was so many cups and sarcers. Besides which, the paper here says, she walks about Munich with a bulldog to perfect her innocence.

Mrs Nutts. Innocence! I'm not cruel—no, I should hope not; but, as I'm a living woman, if I was the Queen, I'd gullyteen her!

NUTTS *comes in.*

Nutts. Hallo! Mrs Nutts! Talking about bloodshed in that horrible manner?

Mrs Nutts. Oh, of course; you'll take her part. It's such creturs that are most cared for; but I only wish I was Queen, that's all. I'm not cruel, as I said afore; but as sure as I'd a palace gate, her head should be a-top of it; yes, if she'd a

thousand bayonets for busks, that it should. And you ought to be ashamed of yourself, Nutts—you, the father of a family—to stand there taking the cretur's part. Dormalolez, indeed !

Nutts. Oh, that's what it is, eh ? Now, Mr Nosebag, will you take the chair ? I've read all about that.

Mrs Nutts. Of course you have ; I saw you laughing and enjoying yourself, and I knew by the way of you there could be no good in it. Go on, Mr Tickle ; of course the cretur has turned the poor Queen out of her palace, and is at this moment walking about the town with her crown upon her head—a minx—jest like 'em.

Tickle. Not at all. For here's a letter from Munich of the 22d ult. that says (*reads*) : " The exasperation of the populace of our city against Mlle. Lola Montes has become so great that the authorities, in order to prevent disturbances, have required the young lady to quit the town."

Mrs Nutts. " Young lady ! " Such creturs ! Well—if pisoning can ever be lawful—but go on.

Tickle. (*Reads.*) " This she did last night, going to the village of Sturemberg, situated at about five leagues from Munich. Her carriage was escorted by a strong detachment of dragoons from the garrison."

Nutts. At the village of Sturemberg ? Ha ! like

a letter at the post-office, I s'pose—"to be left till called for."

Mrs Nutts. Well, Nutts, I wonder how you can joke at such a matter. As a husband and father of a family, it ought to make your blood run cold. It does *me*.

Peabody. Well, I've heard of Venus drawn by doves——

Mrs Nutts. I have it in a valentine; and then, like a foolish girl, believed in it.

Peabody. But I don't fancy Venus with her bulldog. However, they say the King's mad—don't they?

Slowgoe. No doubt on it. For isn't he the same King that's writ poems and started a newspaper? If I was on a jury, that would be enough for me. I'd send him to a lunatic asylum for life.

Mrs Nutts. Very right, Mr Slowgoe; any man who can serve his Queen as he's done, I'd put him in a straight jacket for the rest of his days, with only one arm out on Sundays.

Limpy. Never mind them foreigners; let's think of the wirtues of our own homes. You've a vote for Vestminster, haven't you, Mr Nutts?

Nutts. I have, sir. A vote—though I say it—as pure as drifted snow.

Mrs Nutts. And quite as uncomfortable. Often when the children want things, Nutts will have

the money for the taxes to preserve what he calls his independent vote. And for years and years—no matter how I've been pinched—he has preserved it. And what's the good on it? Independence! I don't blame anybody for being independent when they can afford it; then it's right and respectable. Otherwise it's a piece of extravagance beyond poor people.

Nutts. Now, my dear, if you'll let alone my politics, I'll promise not to interfere with your turnip-tops; and I'm sure, if turnip-tops can speak, I heard 'em just now crying out for you to come and pick 'em in the kitchen. A cleaverer woman at greens never lived; but for all that, my dear, you are not quite up in the House of Commons. (*Mrs Nutts looks an unspoken repartee, and whisks out.*) Yes, gentlemen, as I said, I *have* a vote.

Peabody. Well, is it promised?

Nutts. Why, I'm taken a little aback. I rayther like the address of Mr Cochrane; but, as I once heerd a feller say at the play—"His highness is discovered."

Slowgoe. Well, I'm not surprised—not at all. When a man promises liberty by the bushel—universal suffrage and all that—I know what to expect. I haven't read the partic'lars; but it's true, isn't it, that he went about the country as a wandering minstrel?

Peabody. Why, I understand that, blushing like a gentleman, he has owned as much.

Slowgoe. As I say, I haven't heard the partic'lars; but he went about, didn't he, with a hurdy-gurdy and white mice?

Nutts. Oh dear, no; went with guitar, and twangled the wires. But I don't care so much about that—no, and I could have forgiven the mice, for mice out of Parliament aren't so bad as rats in; but the unfortunate young youth—I mean Don Juan de Vega Cochrane—writ a book that, though it was all about soft-hearted ladies, wasn't quite a book of beauty. Now, the worst of black used in all this blackening world is the black that's put upon the name of a kind, unsuspecting woman. It's a hard job for a man to get his hands clean after using it—it will stick worse than the real "Tyrian dye."

Slowgoe. And so this patriot—this hurdy-gurdy politician—this minstrel boy of Westminster—won't stand, eh, for Parl'ment?

Nosebag. P'r'aps he may sing, then. Shouldn't wonder if he was to canvass the voters' wives with his guitar, with pink ribbons about 'is neck, dust like Mr James Wallack, for the Brigand, with a new sort of song—"Gentle Electors;" or, "The Minstrel Boy to the Poll is gone." If he was only to try that dodge, and the women had votes,

I'm blest if, in my opinion, he wouldn't chant plumpers out of all of 'em. I'm certain on it, a man with one of them twangling guitars is a more dangerous cretur about a house than with a double-loaded blunderbuss.

Nutts. And so I've been reading Mr Charles Lushington's speech, and my mind's made up; if he sticks to what he says, I shall prime him with my vote for Parl'ment.

Slowgoc. I'm very happy—very proud to see—that his Royal Highness Prince Albert consents to be the Chancellor for Cambridge. Here it is from the *Post*. The deputation went to the palace on Tuesday. (*Reads.*) “His Royal Highness expressed himself in the warmest terms for the distinguished honour conferred upon him by the University of Cambridge, and the sincere gratification he felt in accepting it. His Royal Highness conversed with the deputation on the subject of English university discipline, *and evinced considerable knowledge* of the Oxford and Cambridge systems.” What do you think of that, eh?

Nutts. Why, nothing; princes always do “evince considerable knowledge” on the very shortest notice upon anything.

Peabody. Quite true, Mr Nutts. If they'd made the Prince the King of M. Leverrier's new

planet just discovered, his Royal Highness would have evinced "considerable knowledge" of all its plains and mountains, besides a very intimate acquaintance with some of the principal inhabitants.



THE HEDGEHOG LETTERS.



THE HEDGEHOG LETTERS.

Containing the opinions and adventures of JUNIPER HEDGEHOG, cabman, London; and written to his relatives and acquaintance in various parts of the world.

LETTER I.—*To Peter Hedgehog, at Sydney.*

DEAR PETER,—at last I'm settled at my heart's content. For fifteen years and more, I've been fighting, and punching, and screwing, and doing—the Lord forgive me!—all sorts of mean tricks to be respectable; and now I'm happy, for I've given the thing up. I've got rid of every bit of the gentleman, and drive a cab. Ha! you don't know—you can't think—what a blessing it is to get rid of all cares about what's genteel. It's like taking off fine tight boots, and stretching yourself in comfortable old slippers. How respectability did pinch, and gall, and rub the skin off me, to be sure; but I've done with it. I've given

up the trumpery, for the good, stout, weather-proof character of cabman.

Respectability is all very well for folks who can have it for ready money ; but to be obliged to run in debt for it—oh, it's enough to break the heart of an angel. Well, I've gone a good round, and it's nothing but right that I should be comfortable at last. Wasn't all the sweetness of my little boyhood lost in an attorney's office? At a time of life when I ought to have been bird's-nesting, shoeing cats with walnut-shells, spinning cock-chafers on pins, and enjoying myself like any other child of my age—there I was half the day wearing out a wooden desk with my young breast-bone, and the other half running about, like a young cannibal, to serve writs: sneaking and shuffling, and lying worse than any playbill, and feeling as happy as a devil's imp on a holiday whenever I "served" my man. Yes, Peter, that I've any more heart than an oyster left me, is a special favour of Providence ; for what a varmint I was ! If it hadn't been for the playhouse, I should have been ruined. Yes, Peter, but for the Coburg Theatre, I have no doubt that at this time I should have been a sharp attorney, not able to smell as much as a lucifer-match without the horrors. 'Tis a great place for morals, the playhouse, Peter. As I say, it quite drew me back into the paths of virtue.

Old Simcox, my master, to keep me active, used to give me a shilling for every writ I served. He used to say there was nothing like rubbing a young dog's nose in the blood, to make him sharp after the game.

Well, with these shillings I used to go to the Coburg gallery. That gallery was my salvation. When I used to see the villain, who'd been so lucky all through the piece, chopped down like chopped wood at the last, my conscience used to stir worse than the stomach-ache. And so by degrees I liked the playhouse more, and the writs less. And one day when Simcox told me to go and serve a writ upon the very actor who used to do me so much good—for he was always the cock of the walk as far as virtue went—I gave him such a speech about “tremble, villain, for there is an eye,” that the old fellow gasped again. When he had recovered himself enough to fling a ruler at my head, I put on my cap and turned my back upon the law. After this, I sold playbills at the Coburg doors, and that's how I picked up the deal I know about the stage.

And so I went scrambling on till twenty, and how I lived I don't know. Indeed, when I look back, I often think money's of no use at all; folks do quite as well, or better, without it. Money's a habit—nothing more. At twenty—how it happened

I can't tell—I found myself a tradesman. Yes; I sold baked 'tatoes, and—on nipping winter days—used to feel myself a sort of benefactor to what is called our species. I had read a little at book-stalls and so on; and many a time have I, with a sort of pride, asked myself if many of the Roman emperors ever sold 'tatoes, salt, and a bit of butter for a penny? I should think not. Well, at three-and-twenty down came that bit of money on me! Whether it was really a relation who left it or not, or whether it was all a mistake, I never asked—I took the money. And that bit of money made me swell not a little. Yes; I swelled like a toad—full of poison with it. Then I went to make no end of a fortune. I thought luck had fallen deep in love with me, and I couldn't go too far. There was a gentleman who always came with an order to the Coburg. A few years ago I should have said he was a Jew; but now I know manners, and so call him a gentleman of the Hebrew persuasion. Well; if he couldn't talk melted butter! We were both to make our fortunes, but I was to find the money for the couple. We went upon 'Change; and, as he said, both of us were ruined. Ruin, however, could have been nothing strange to him, for he never seemed the worse for it. From that time, Peter, I was flung upon the hard stones of London. I had too much pride to go to the

'tatoes again, and so took to billiards. Ha! Peter, it's dirty bread; it's bread with the headache and the heartache in it. That wouldn't do long; though how I did shuffle, and hedge, and make the most of the innocent, and all to try and keep myself respectable.

I tell you, for fifteen years I fought it out like a man. I didn't care what came of it, what folks said of me—I would be respectable. A superfine coat and a prime dinner I would have; but ha, Peter! it's all been taken out of me. I've given it up, I tell you, and I'm a happy cabman. Bless your soul! you can't think what a happy life it is. Always seeing something new, and always riding with somebody. For you must know my cab isn't one of the new concerns that divide the drive and his fare. That wouldn't suit me nohow. No; I like to ride upon what I call an equality, and talk and learn life as I go; you can't believe the sort of people that I sometimes drive about, and the things I get out of 'em. But I intend to write it all down, and to save the bother of posting, and all that, to print my letters at once. Then if my dear relations and acquaintance that are scattered in all the corners of the world don't know anything about me, 'twill be their fault, not mine.

I couldn't have thought that a cabman's life could have so improved the mind. But when we

meet at the Spotted Lion—that's our watering-house—there's something to be heard, I can tell you. I never troubled my head with politics before I drove a cab: no, I was little better than an animal; but I should think that now I know something of the Bill of Rights, and all that, and all from the newspapers. When the nose-bag's on the old mare, don't I read the debates in Parliament!

I was going to write you a bit upon the Sugar Question, but old Lumpy—he's our waterman—has called me for a job. So at present no more from your cousin and wellwisher,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER II.—*To Mrs Hedgehog of New York.*

MY DEAR OLD GRANDMOTHER,—Thank all your stars and two garters that you're out of England! We're all going to be made Catholics. It's a settled thing. You ought henceforth never to cook a supper of sprats without looking at the gridiron, thinking of Smithfield, and being special grateful for your deliverance. Nobody can tell what's come to half the bishops, and three parts of the clergy.

Such a noise about surplices and gowns! The old story again. The old fight—as far as I can tell—about white and black: one party vowing that the real thing's white, whilst the other will have it that the true white's black. Yes, grandmother, it's the old battle of black and white that, as far as my learning goes, has for hundreds of years filled this nice sort of world of ours with all kinds of trouble. Nobody can tell what's set these ministers of peace—as they call themselves—all of a sudden in such a pucker; but I think I've hit upon the cause, and here it is.

All this noise in the Church has begun in the playhouse. I'm sure of it. Foolish people say and write that we English folks don't care about plays. There never was such a mistake. In our hearts, all of us, and especially many of the bishops and clergy, dote upon the playhouse; but then, you see, it isn't thought quite the thing for the clergy to go there. The Bishop of Exeter—I'm cocksure of it—has a consuming love for a pantomime; but then he wouldn't like to be seen in the boxes of Drury Lane, giving his countenance to the clown, that takes his tithe of all sorts of things that come under his nose. The Bishop of London too—he, I've heard it said, got made a bishop of by some intimate acquaintance of his that wrote plays in Greek. Well, he can't go and

enjoy his laugh at the Haymarket, or have his feelings warmed, till they boil over at his eyes, at the Victoria (that was once the Coburg); so you see, as the bishops can't decently stir from the Church to the playhouse, they've set their heads together to bring the playhouse to the Church. And this accounts for all their fuss in the Church about what the playhouse people call the "dresses and decorations." They seem to think that religion isn't enough of itself, unless it's "splendidly got up." Whereupon they want to go back to the old properties of crosses and candlesticks, and so forth, to fill the pews. Well, when the bishops—the grey, sober men, the fathers of the Church—have this hankering after a bit of show, it isn't to be expected that the young fellows will refuse the finery. Certainly not. Whereupon they're bringing in all sorts of fashions, it seems. They don't think it enough to belong to the Army of Martyrs, unless they've very handsome regimentals.

In some of the churches they've revived what they call the offertory. It's this. At a certain part of the service, they send round a bag or a pocket at the end of a stick to all the people, to put money in. I have seen the same sort of thing used in the streets to reach to the first-floors, when the tumblers go about. Well, this money is gathered for a-many things; but John Bull doesn't like it.

They say the crocodile has his tender part somewhere about his belly—John's vital part is his breeches-pocket. Nevertheless, there's no doubt that the Bishop of Exeter—for he's very strong upon the offertory—has introduced it to make religion, what is so very much liked in England, select and respectable. You see the people who can't afford to drop their Sunday shillings and sixpences, won't have the face to go to worship at all—or they may turn Dissenters, and so the Established Church, like the Opera-house, will be made a place for what the *Standard* (I can tell you *that* is a religious paper, though you may never hear of it) calls the "better classes." Poor people may turn Anabaptists, or anything of that sort that's very cheap. Purple and fine linen a'n't for everybody; no, isn't there good stout sound cloth, and striped cotton?

The Bishop of London has been in very hot water with the folks at Tottenham about the Sunday silver, which they won't pay at all. Well, he says they needn't pay it for a twelvemonth. So it seems that a truth isn't a truth all at once, it takes a year to grow. According to the Bishop, it would seem that truth was born like a tadpole, that wanted time afore it came to be a perfect frog.

Well, then, there's another notion about. It's said that the wants of the people are so many that

it's quite out of the power of the labouring clergy to attend to 'em. It would be worse than drayman's work. And so it has been recommended that there should be a sort of Church militia raised in addition to the regulars. It was only last night that I drove down to Fulham a very chatty sort of man—I think the under-butler of the Bishop of London. Well, he talked a good deal about this militia; they're to be called Deacons, I think, and are to be considered a sort of a parson; like young ravens not yet come to their full black.

Well, it was quite plain that he hoped to be one of 'em, for he said the places would be open to anybody, really pious, of the humblest parts. He was very talkative, and said these deacons would have all the comforts of the monks, without any of their vows; going to people's houses; worming themselves into their families, and learning all their business carnal—yes, I think carnal was his word—and spiritual. When I asked him if, like the monks, they were to wear gowns and hoods (as I'd seen 'em at the Coburg), he winked very knowingly, and said, with the blessing of Providence, that might come. At all events, they might begin with letters and numbers worked in gold or silver in their collars; and, something after the new police, have a pink or purple strap about their cuffs when upon spiritual duty.

Folks are in a mighty stir about the matter ; but I think Exeter and London might bring all the people of their own minds, if they only knew how to go about the business. I've just been reading Miss Martineau about mesmerism, and she says this : " It is almost an established opinion among some of the wisest students of mesmerism, that the mind of the somnambule [you must ask somebody about these words] mirrors that of the mesmerist." And then she goes on to say, " It certainly is true to a considerable extent, as is pretty clearly proved when an ignorant child—ignorant, especially, of the Bible—*discourses of the Scriptures and divinity when mesmerised by a clergyman.*"

Now the bishops have nothing to do but to mesmerise the people—I'm sure I've known parsons who've done wonders with sleepy congregations—have only to get 'em "to mirror *their* minds," and they may do as they please with crosses, and surplices, and saints, and offertory, and all that. In a word, the Bishops of Exeter and London have only to send all their flocks well to sleep, to shear 'em after what fashion they like. As yet, my dear grandmother, I haven't given nothing to the offertory, and I won't agree to the move about the surplice. But flesh is weak. I can't tell how long I may hold out. Fashion's a strong thing, and always strongest when it sets towards

the Church. The day may come when I may take my grey mare—as I'm told they take all the animals in Italy—to be blessed and sprinkled on the feast of St Anthony, and the Bishop of London may do the job for her. But I'll hold out as long as I can. In the mean time, let me have your prayers, and believe me your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

P.S.—I did intend to write to cousin Bridget, but Lumpy's called me away for a long job.

LETTER III.—*To Mrs Hedgehog of New York.*

MY DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—We're all safe for a time; the Pope hasn't quite got hold of us yet. You recollect when I was a boy, how I would fling stones, and call names, and go among other boys pelting 'em right and left, and swearing I didn't mean to hurt 'em, but played off my pranks only for their good? And then, when I used to get into a terrible fight, you remember how you used to come in at the last minute, and carry me off home just as I was nearly giving in? And then, how afterwards I used to brag that if grandmother hadn't

taken me away, I'd have licked twenty boys; one down, another come on! Well, well; the more I see of life, the more I'm sure men only play over their boys' tricks; only they do it with graver faces and worse words.

What you did for me, the Archbishop of Canterbury has done for the Bishop of Exeter. Almost at the last minute he has wrapped his apron about the Bishop and carried him out of the squabble. And now the Bishop writes a letter as long as a church bell-rope, in which he says he only gives up fighting to show that he's obedient—more than hinting, that if he'd been allowed to go on, he'd have beaten all comers, with one hand tied behind him. At all events, he's very glad there's been a rumpus, as it proves there's pluck on both sides.

Yes; he says, "Whatever may have been the temporary results, *I do not and cannot regret* that I deemed it necessary publicly to assert those principles of Church authority, which it is alike the duty of all of us to recognise and to inculcate. The very vehemence with which the assertion of them has been resisted *proves*, if proof were necessary, *the necessity of their being asserted*, and of our never suffering them to fall into oblivion." If this isn't talking in the dark, I don't know what a rushlight is. You might as well

say that the "vehemence" with which a man resists a kicking, "proves the necessity" of kicking him. Because folks wouldn't at any price have surplices forced down their throats, and offertory-bags poked into their pews, why, that's the very reason you should try to push both surplice and bag upon 'em. As I say, it shows there's blood on both sides; and it's a comfort to know that both parties are ready for a tussle. Well, I've heard this sort of preaching from a Tipperary cabman, and never wondered; but it *does* sound droll from a bishop. I've read something somewhere about the thunder of the Church, and have now no doubt that it must be very serviceable; it must so clear the air after a certain time. Here, for months, has Exeter been thundering in the newspapers—crack, crack, crack! it's gone almost every morning, till people wondered if the steeple of their own parish church was safe; and now, at last, he sits himself down, and smiling as if his face was smeared with honey, folds his hands and softly says, "Thank heaven! we've had a lovely storm." Talking about thunder, I once read a poem—one of those strange, odd things that give your brain a twist—called "Festus." There was a passage in it that certainly did bother me; but now I can perfectly understand it. Somebody says to another—

“Why, how now!

You look as though you fed on *battered thunder*.”

Now, the Bishop of Exeter—I say it with all respect, grandmother, for you know you always taught me to love the bishops—is this very man. You’ve only to read his letters, really so noisy, and yet, as he declares, meaning to be so soft—to be sure that what he lives and thrives upon is *battered thunder*. The Bishop, of course, isn’t alone in his happiness at the row. One of his best friends, the *Morning Post*, believes it will do a deal of good. True piety, like physic, wants shaking to have its proper effect. The *Post* talked a little while ago about “the means which have made the Church arise from its slumbers *like a giant refreshed* ;” that is, getting up in a white surplice, to be refreshed with ready money from the pews. I don’t know how it is, but I don’t think the Church ought to be compared to a giant. All the giants I know are people of very queer character. The best of ’em gluttonous, swaggering, overbearing chaps, with nothing too hot or too heavy for ’em to carry off: now, these are not at all the sort of creatures that we are likely to think of when we’re reading the Bishop of Exeter’s letters. No; they rather remind us of a shepherd playing on his pipe—I’ve only read of these things—to his sheep and lambkins. The *Morning Post* further says:—

“We are not among those who feel alarm at the present state of the Church. *The fermentation* will throw off the scum, and what is good will remain.”

Now, grandmother, you know enough of boiling to know that “the scum” always floats on the top. Now, is anything on the top to be thrown off? Don’t flurry yourself; the *Post* doesn’t mean that. What it means is, that a whole lot of the vulgar members of the Established Church will be so fermented by the surplice, the offertory, and other Popish ingredients,—grains of Paradise, as they tell us—that they ’ll be thrown clean out of it. You know how Bill Wiggins once poisoned the pond, so that the fish was floated dead ashore. In the same way the Church may get rid of its small fry, and “what is good will remain.” Then the Church will be something like. Now, it’s old and weather-stained, with time blotches and cracks about it. But how fine it will look with crucifixes and pictures of the Virgin inside—a clean white surplice always in the upper pulpit—and the whole building beautifully and thickly faced with *Roman* cement!

But at this present writing, it isn’t all over in the city of Exeter. The Bishop, having had his fling, one of his journeymen, the Rev. Mr Courtenay, minister of St Sidwell’s, comes in for a little more

than his share of the performance. Don't think I'm profane, dear grandmother—no, quite the reverse. But you *have* in your time been to Astley's, and seen the riding in the ring. Well, the principal rider comes, and does all manner of wonders whilst cantering and galloping, and going all kind of paces. When he's done, he makes his bow and goes off. And then after him comes the clown. Well, he's determined to outdo all that's been done before him, and for this purpose goes on with all sorts of manœuvres. Now the Bishop of Exeter has made his bow, and the Rev. Mr Courtenay is, at the time I write, before the public. He *will* preach in a surplice; and that he may do so with safety—for all the folks in Exeter are in a pretty pucker about it—he goes to and from church, as I may say, in the bosom of the police. Oh dear! isn't it sad work, grandmother? this noise about black and white gowns, when Churchmen ought to think of nothing but black and white souls? Black and white! as if there was a pattern-book of colours for heaven! However, how it will end nobody knows; but if the matter goes on as it promises, it is thought the Rev. Mr Courtenay will call to his aid the yeomanry, and be escorted to St Sidwell's by a body-guard armed with ball-cartridge. It is said he has bespoken two howitzers to keep off the mob from the church doors.

I 've hardly time to save the packet ; so remain,
your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

P.S.—They do say that Mr Courtenay wants to be made a martyr of. But the days for burning are all gone by. Besides, other folks declare that the parson of St Sidwell's would have been too green to burn at any time.

LETTER IV.—*To Michael Hedgehog, at Hong-Kong.*

DEAR MICHAEL,—When you quitted England, in the Hong-Kong division of police, I promised to write you all the news I could ; at least, such news as I knew you 'd like. The crimes and evils of population were, I know, always a favourite matter with you. I 'm sorry to say the evil's getting worse every day ; and no wonder. You 'll hardly believe it, Michael, seeing what a surplus of pauper flesh and blood respectable people have upon their hands, that there's a set of ignoramuses who absolutely offer a premium for babies ; for all the world, as they give away gold and silver medals for prize pigs. I take the bit of news I send you from the *Times*.

You must know that a few weeks ago a "Mrs Clements of 21 Hunt Street, Mile-end, Newtown," had at once "three children, two girls and a boy," all, too, impudent enough to live. Well, the *Times* published an account of the misdemeanour, and—would you believe it?—some "generous individuals," as they are stupidly called, sent, among 'em, £38 for the mother and little ones.

Now, what is this, as you 'd say, but fostering a superabundance of population? It's no other than offering bribes to bring people into the country, already as full as a cask of herrings; and when every trade is eating part of its members up, for all the world as melancholy monkeys eat their own tails! Isn't it shocking to encourage the lower classes to add to themselves? There's nothing that money won't do; and I've no doubt whatever that, for some years to come, all children at Mile-end will be born by threes and fours. A shrewd fellow like you must have remarked how people imitate one another. You never yet heard of an odd act of suicide, or any kind of horror with originality in it, that it didn't for a little time become the fashion, as if it was a new bonnet or a new boot. And so, among the lower orders, it will be in the matter of babies. Now, if Mrs Clements had been sent to prison for the offence, then the evil might have been nipped in the bud; but to reward her

for her three babies, who could show no honest means of providing for themselves, why, it's flying in the face of all political economy. Three babies at once at Mile-end is monstrous. Even twins should be confined to the higher ranks.

You'll be glad to hear that we've been giving a round of dinners to your Chinese hero, Sir Henry Pottinger. At Manchester he was hailed as the very hero of cotton prints. They dined him very handsomely, and you may be sure there was a good deal of after-dinner speaking. A Rev. Canon Wray answered the toast for the Clergy. I once read of a melancholy man, who thought all his body was turned into a glass bottle, and so wouldn't move for fear of going to pieces. Now, I'm certain of it, that there's a sort of clergyman who, after some such humour, thinks himself a forty-two pounder; for he is never heard at a public meeting that he doesn't fire away shot and gunpowder. The Rev. Canon said (or rather fired) his thanks, that Sir H. Pottinger "had opened a way for the march of the gospel." Now, Michael, I never heard of any artillery in the New Testament. And he further said:—

"British arms seem scarcely ever to know a defeat. In the east, west, north, and south, our soldiers and sailors are, in the end, ever victorious. I cannot but think that, as great Britain holds the tenets of the gospel

in greater purity than any other nation, so she is intended by the Divine will to carry inestimable blessings to all distant benighted climes."

Well, Michael, I've heard of a settler in mistake sowing gunpowder for onions ; but the Rev. Canon Wray, with his best knowledge about him, thinks there's nothing like sowing gunpowder for the "scriptural mustard-seed." I suppose he's right, because he's a canon ; and therefore not to be disputed with by your ignorant, but affectionate brother,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER V.—*To Mrs Barbara Wilcox, at
Philadelphia.*

DEAR SISTER,—It gave me much pleasure to learn from your letter that yourself, husband, and baby got safe and sound to your present home. You ask me to send you my portrait. It isn't in my power to do so at present ; but if I should be unfortunate enough to kill anybody, or set a dock-yard a-fire, or bamboozle the Bank—or, in short, do anything splashy to get a front place in the dock at the Old Bailey—you may then have my portrait at next to nothing. Then, I can tell you, it

will be drawn in capital style—at full length, three quarters, half length, and I know not what.

I've read somewhere, that in what people call the good old times—as times always get worse, what a pretty state the world will be in a thousand years hence!—when there were dead men's heads on the top of Temple Bar, grinning down, what people call an example, on the folks below, that there used to be fellows with spyglasses; and, at a penny a peep, they showed to the curious all the horror of the aforesaid heads, not to be discovered by the naked eye. Well, the heads are gone, and the spyglass traders to; but for all that, there's the same sort of show going on, and a good scramble to turn the penny by it, only after a different fashion. Murderers are now shown in newspapers. They are no longer gibbeted in irons; no, that was found to be shocking, and of no use: they are now nicely cut in wood, and so insinuated into the bosoms of families. The more dreadful the murder, the greater value the portrait; which, for a time, is made a sort of personal acquaintance to thousands of respectable folks who pay the newspaper owner—the spyglass-man of our time—so much to stare at it as long as they like. I am certain that the shortest cut to popularity of some sort is to cut somebody's throat. A dull, stupid fellow, that pays his way and does harm to nobody, why,

he may die off like a fly in November and be no more thought of. But only let him do some devil's deed—do a bit of murder as coolly as he 'd pare a turnip—and what he says, whether he takes coffee, or brandy-and-water “cold without;” when he sleeps, and when he wakes; and when he smiles, and when he grinds his teeth,—all of this is put down as if all the world went upon his movements, and couldn't go on without knowing 'em. To a man who wants to make a noise, he doesn't care how, all this is very tempting. I hope I mayn't come to be cut in wood, but still one would like to make a rumpus some way before one died.

There's commonly an Old Bailey fashion, the same as a St James's fashion. Just now—as you want to know all the domestic news—poison's carrying everything before it. 'Twould seem as if people suddenly thought their relations rats, and treated 'em accordingly. I never yet tried my hand upon a book, but I do think that I could throw off a nice little story with lots of arsenic in it—a sort of genteel guide to Newgate. I've been reading about a lady, one Tofana, who made a great stir some years ago. She could give arsenic in such a manner that she set people for death as you 'd set an alarum. She got a good many pupils, young married ladies, about her, who all of 'em put their husbands aside like an old-fashioned gown. Now, I

do think that a novel called "The Ladies' Poisoning Club," or "Widowhood at Will," would just now make a bit of a stir. I don't mean to say that I could write a book, that is, what folks call *write*; but I've a knack: I know I could imitate writing, just as an ape imitates a man. The subject grows upon me. I certainly think I shall make a beginning. However, of this you shall hear more by the next packet. I do think I could make a hit in what I call arsenicated literature. There's arsenicated candles, why shouldn't there be arsenicated books?—In haste, your affectionate brother,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

P.S.—If I do the book, I shall follow it up with a sort of moral continuation, to be called "The Stomach-Pump."

LETTER VI.—*To Mr Jonas Wilcox, Philadelphia.*

DEAR BROTHER - IN - LAW,—As my last letter was to sister, it is but fair that you should have the next dose of ink. Well, Parliament's opened; and Sir Robert's made a clean breast of it—that is, if a Prime Minister can do such a thing. There never was such harmony in the House of Com-

mons! After Sir Robert had spoken out, you might have thought all the House was holding nothing but a love-feast. I was in the gallery—I won't tell you how I got in—and never saw such a sight in all my life. All the papers, I can't tell why, have oddly suppressed an account of the matter; therefore, what you get from me will be exclusive—from your "own" correspondent. Treasure it accordingly.

When Sir Robert said he should keep on the income-tax for three years longer, almost the whole House fell into fits of delight at his goodness. You might have seen Whig embracing Tory, Radical throwing his arms about the neck of Conservative, and Young England with tears of gratitude rolling like butter-milk down upon his white waistcoat. When Sir Robert had quite finished his speech, there was a shower of nose-gays flung upon him from the Treasury benches, just in the same way as now and then you pelt the actors at the playhouses! Sir Robert picked 'em all up, and pressed 'em to his heart, and from the corners of his mouth smiled the thousand thanks. Then sitting down, he very handsomely gave a flower apiece to what he calls his colleagues. He insisted—amidst the cheers of the House—on putting a forget-me-not in the button-hole of Mr Gladstone (who sobbed audibly at the touch of

friendship); and then he handed a lily—as an emblem of the Home Secretary's reputation—to Sir James Graham. At this, I needn't tell you, there were "roars of laughter." To be sure, at this season of the year these flowers were artificial; but for which reason, it was said by somebody, they were more in keeping with Sir Robert's measures. Two or three members—for form's sake—abused the income-tax, but nevertheless said they would vote for it. Lord John Russell called it a shameful, infamous, ignominious, tyrannical, prying impost: he would, however, support it. This is as if a man should denounce another as a coward, a ruffian, and a thief, and then—fold him to his bosom! But they do odd things in Parliament. Sir Robert says we are to have the income-tax for only three years longer. Nonsense! He intends that we should grow with it upon us. He'll no more take it off than a Chinese mother will take off the little shoe that, for the beauty of the full-grown woman, she puts upon the foot of her baby girl. The child may twist, and wriggle, and squall; and the mother may now and then say pretty things—make pretty promises to it to keep it quiet—but the shoe's there for the sufferer's life. Now John Bull—thinks Sir Robert Peel—will move all the better with his foot in the income-tax: all the better too,

because it most galls and crushes a lower member. However, we are to have the duty off glass; which, says Sir Robert, is much better than if the duty were taken off light. It is not for such as me to dispute with a minister, but I can't see how, if I'm to get my house glazed duty free, it's quite as good as if there was no window-tax. To be sure, if a man, as a householder, were to new glaze himself from top to bottom once a quarter, it might be another thing; he might save upon the glass what he now pays for the sun that, in London, tries to come through it. He may certainly afford to have more windows, but will, I say, the saving on the glass pay for the light? Besides, not light alone, but air is paid for. There is at the present time a secret agitation going on among the cats of England. The grievance is this: A man can't make a hole in his house for the cat to pass in and out to mouse or visit, without the said hole being surcharged as a window. This is a wrong done upon the cats of the country; but whether done out of sympathy with the rats or not, let Sir James Graham answer. However, one comfort will come of cheap glass: folks who choose to visit museums and such public places, may break what they like of the material at a decreased cost, for the pleasure. Before it was bad enough, nothing, according to the law, being worth more than five

pounds ; so any malicious or morbid scoundrel (or both) might smash any rare piece of antiquity, and handing to the magistrate any sum over five pounds, bid him take the change out of that. I think a club might be formed for certain young chaps about town, to be called "The Independent Smashers." They might subscribe to a common fund to pay fines ; and each in turn draw for the pleasure of a bit of destruction. With the duty taken off the article, it would be remarkably cheap sport. However, there is no doubt of it, that Peel has got great glory by taking off this tax. A good deal of his reputation as a minister will be looked upon as glass ; such side of his reputation in the eyes of an admiring country to be always "kept upwards."

We are to have sugar, too, at about three-half-pence a pound cheaper ; which Mrs Hedgehog tells me will allow us to save at least sixpence a week : however, what we shall have to pay to protect the West Indians, she, poor soul, never dreams of, and I should be a brute to tell her. Therefore—poor thing!—she may now and then toast Sir Robert in her Twankay, without thinking of the £140,000 we lose in the other way. Then again, what we shall save in cotton is wonderful !

The auctioneers, too, are all right. They are to knock down at so much for life, instead of taking

out a yearly licence. It is thought that this enlarged piece of statesmanship came about out of compliment to George Robins, who, in one of his familiar letters to the Premier, said he'd rather have it so.

However, everybody says Sir Robert Peel's in for life. He's married Downing Street, and nothing but death can them part. One thing's certain, he's got a thumping surplus. And when any man in England gets that, folks are not very particular how he's come by it.

So no more at present from your affectionate
brother-in-law, JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER VII.—*To John Squalid, Weaver,
Stockton.*

DEAR JOHN,—I'm afraid you don't go the right way to make both ends meet. Your letter is full of complaints of poverty, and all that sort of disagreeable thing. I very much fear that you've got into expensive habits, or your sixteen shillings a week would be sure to go further. Why don't you be economical? why don't you copy the prudence shown you by high people? Look here, now. Just read this from Sir Robert Peel's speech.

He is speaking of the marriage (and economy) of Queen Victoria :—

“ It has pleased God to bless that union with the birth of four children, and this, of course, caused a considerable additional demand upon the civil list. In the course of the last year three sovereigns have visited this country ; amongst them were the sovereigns of two of the most powerful countries in the habitable globe—the Emperor of Russia and the King of the French.”

I hope you blush now. Four children : and when—if you will only consider upon it—you come to think how much it costs for babies—how much in tops-and-bottoms alone—how much in short coating, worsted shoes, and all that,—can you, as a loyal subject, forbear to cast up your eyes and close your hands in wonderment at Sir Robert’s picture of royal economy ? There have been four children and three kings come to Windsor Castle, and yet John Bull has never been asked for an extra shilling. If you owe anything anywhere, you are, after this, lost to all sense of self-respect. I give you up. Consider the expense borne by royalty for royal visitors ! The extra night-candles—the extra clean sheets and pillow-cases,—and yet not a farthing more, *as yet*, demanded ! To be sure, it wouldn’t have been very gracious towards the three sovereigns, if the bill for their entertainment

had been immediately sent down to Parliament: they might, as gentlemen, have felt inclined to send over their cheques for the amount: but—no matter for that.

I clearly see what lies before you—it's the union, and nothing less. And you don't know what *that*—under the benevolence of Sir James Graham—is to be yet. He has just brought in a bill for another experiment upon the poor. Indeed Graham, in his bills for the treatment of the poor, may be likened to one Dr Majendie, a French surgeon, in his treatment of rabbits. He would take a live rabbit and cut its nerves here and there to make some great discovery—to learn what point of agony the rabbit could bear—and still keep a sort of life within it, eat and drink. Graham is the Poor-Law Majendie! He's brought in something like a Settlement Bill; a bill which is to take the poor—to cut their nerves and heart-strings from their parishes—and settle them, when they need, what he in his droll manner calls relief, into unions, melting three-and-twenty parishes into one union! Old feelings—old affections for old places are to be nothing—ties of kindred nothing, nothing. Sir James will sever all these, and will then triumphantly show the world how well the human rabbit can exist with them cut through and through.

When in the fulness of years and reputation it

may please Providence to remove Sir James from this vale of tears—and certainly it's no fault of *his* measures if the vale is very dry—there ought to be a monument raised to his memory, made of paupers' bones.

However, history will be sure to do this for him. As the poor are to cease to have what is called any associations of place—why should they have any associations of particular names? Why should they not be lettered and numbered like the police? Such a plan would go far to take the conceit out of them, by reminding them most forcibly of the difference between themselves and the luckier people who bear Christian and surnames. More, that there should be no mistake, no shuffling in the matter, the pauper babe, instead of being christened, might be indelibly tattooed both with letter and number. If at any time of its future life it should by some strange accident realise sufficient money to make it respectable, it might then be allowed to be baptized; in the same way that now a man, on coming to immense wealth, is allowed by the *Gazette* to slough the vulgarity of Wiggins into the aristocracy of Mosmancourt of Godolphin. I hope Sir James will think of this.

But the poor man was always a culprit. You heard I was once a lawyer's clerk, and so, John, respect my Latin. The poor were *adscripti glebæ*

—that is, bound to the soil, a bit of the earth, a lump of the clay, with no more power to remove themselves than a bramble-bush ; if they did, see what came to 'em. I've only just picked up the matter, but here it is—let it be a warning to you. In the time of Richard the Second—what a very pauper he'd been if born one !—if any poor man left his home without a justice's leave, and was taken in the crime, why, he was put in the stocks for his rascality. Henry the Eighth—a real tiger of the royal menagerie—made a law that whipped any beggar begging from his native place. Another of his laws—some of 'em were written in the best blood of the country—only whipped the beggar for his first offence, but cut off his right ear for the second, and blackened him from head to heel a felon for the third. Well, Edward the Sixth, or his ministers, branded the vagabond on the shoulder, and gave him as a slave to anybody who 'd be troubled with him, to be beaten, chained, and otherwise remonstrated with for being poor. He might also, for further ill-manners of running away, be branded in the cheek, and made a slave for life. Another running away, and—here really came a bit of summary humanity—he might be hanged ! Queen Elizabeth punished the beggar by ordering his ear to be “burned through the gristle with a hot iron, of a compass of an inch about”—that is, not much thicker.

Now, John, I hope you lay these things to your heart : I hope you will at once acknowledge the wickedness that has very properly been put upon poverty for hundreds of years, and don't disgrace yourself and your relations by becoming a pauper. I have a great regard for you—a very great regard ; nevertheless, if you come to want, I give you up for ever, and renounce you. I hope, therefore, you will take this warning in good part, and believe me, your affectionate cousin,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER VIII.—*To ———, Naples.*

THANK heaven and the printer that there are such things as ——— ! You, my dear friend, will know to whom they apply, and may therefore receive this letter without its bringing down upon you the Government of Naples. However, don't venture to write me any answer, for I'm in Sir James Graham's books ; I'm down—a marked man. Unhappily for me, a Polish refugee lives in our garret, and the eye of Russia is upon me. Nevertheless, there has been, I find, some good-luck in this. I've now discovered that the two gentlemen with beards, who used to hire me when the Emperor Nicholas was here, to drive them from

one end of the town to the other, did so to come at the plot which was hatching in our attic. However, they got nothing out of me but, as old Lumpy says, *wicey-warsy*. Still I'm not comfortable. As a cabman, I've been boxed up with Spaniards, Italians, Sardinians, Austrians—men of all countries and colours. Well, I don't know at this moment that every letter to Juniper Hedgehog—that is, every copy—isn't in the office of Sir James Graham. A nice thing this to go to bed and sleep upon! When I think of the sort of letters—full of delicate and tender matters—that has come to me, I own it does make me burn and fluster to think that I may not have a single secret to myself: no, Sir James—the Post-Office burglar—has broken into my affairs, and at this moment he knows all my poverty, all my little strugglings with little debts—in fact, all my inner man. I seem to myself to walk about the world turned inside out! And this evil, be it remembered, may be the fate of thousands, although, poor wretches, they may not know it. Who shall tell how many men's souls are at the Home Office, under the Graham lock and key? Still, says Sir James, the whole security, not only of *this* country, but, in truth, of the whole world, depends upon wax and wafers.

There is no doubt that last summer a few

Italians were denounced to the Government of Naples, and duly shot, in consequence of seals broken at Downing Street. This is comfortable to reflect upon. Though if Sir James was a squeamish man—which he is not, for no man ever braved the pillory with all its unsavoury accidents with a stronger stomach—then would he never again behold the Queen’s head upon the red post-stamp without thinking of human blood !

Sir James, however, has two natures, or rather two parts. Like the picture of Death and the Lady, Sir James is only corrupt on one side. Thus spoke Tom Duncombe to the foolscap burglar—the sealing-wax Jack Sheppard : “ He has had the meanness, ay, and the baseness, to conceal his act and has not had the courage to avow it.”

Upon this, the Speaker, in one of his conciliatory moods, observed that “such observations were very personal. Would the honourable gentleman withdraw them ?” Whereupon Mr Duncombe answered : “ Sir, I applied those observations to the right honourable gentleman in his ministerial capacity: to those observations and to those topics I adhere ; so they *must and shall remain*.”

And they *do* remain. And Sir James remains “as a minister,” a “mean,” “base,” cowardly agent ! How strange is the distinction between the

minister and the man!—they're quite two different things, like the calipee and calipash of a turtle.

Sir James Graham rose to answer, with a confidence that would have honoured the Old Bailey. He said, "Mr Duncombe was a person quite indifferent to him." This reminds me of the chap who, after he'd been flogged half a mile and more at the cart's tail, with all the world looking on, said to the man that had flayed him, "Sir, you're beneath my notice." I could write more, but Lumpy's called me for a fare. The fun, however, is not yet over; and you may hear more of Sir James in my next. Meantime, if you write, don't either use wax or wafers; it's only wasting property. Send your letters open, and believe me, your faithful friend,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER IX.—*To Mrs Hedgehog of New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—It was very kind of you, though away from Old England, to have prayers put up for the Bishops of Exeter and London, and Mr Courtenay and Mr Ward, with all the unfortunate young clergymen who've been fright-

ening their good Mother Church, for all the world like young ducklings that, hatched by a hen, would take water. The bishops, you will be glad to learn, are much better; and now, Sunday after Sunday, the young parsons are taking off their white surplices and putting on their old gowns, just like idle, flashy, young dogs, who've been making a noise at a masquerade, but are once more prepared to go back to their serious counters. Mr Courtenay and two or three of his kidney did think of putting on chain-armour under their surplices, like the Templars that you once saw in the play of Ivanhoe; but whether the Bishop of Exeter has interfered or not, I can't say: the thing's given up.

Mr Ward, who has been turned out of Oxford for his ideal of a Christian Church—which means a Church with censers and candlesticks, and pictures of the Virgin, and martyrs' bones, and other properties—is going to be married, if the business isn't done already. I shouldn't have written upon the matter, only Mr W. has printed a letter in all the papers, giving *his* notions of the holy state. They certainly are very sweet and complimentary to the lady chosen by Mr Ward, for he says—

“First, I hold it most firmly as a truth even of *natural religion* that celibacy is a *higher condition of life* than marriage.”

Now, if celibacy is the highest condition of life,

how is it that Adam and Eve came together while they were yet in Paradise? Their union, according to Mr Ward, ought to have taken place after they both fell. Matrimony should have followed as a punishment for the apple. And then, when it was commanded, "Increase and multiply," was it supposed that those who obeyed the command would not be in so "high a condition" as those who neglected it? But men read their Bibles through strange spectacles!

However, grandmother, as you like to hear all the chat about the Church, you must know that last week I took up a fare near the oyster-shop in Covent Garden—a very respectable sort of person—in fact, I'm sure one of the Established Church. When he had left the cab, I found that the *Ecclesiastical Gazette* (No. 18) had dropt from his pocket. I've gone through it, and found parts of it—I mean the Church advertisements—very odd indeed. You can't think how strange they read after the New Testament. If you wouldn't think the pulpit-cushion was a counter, after reading 'em. Look here, now:—

"A curate wanted in a large market-town forty miles from London, near a railroad, population *five thousand*, where the incumbent resides and takes his full share of the duty. He must be in Priest's Orders, have a voice sufficiently *loud* for a very large church, and whilst hold-

ing *moderately High Church views*, be chiefly anxious to *seek and save the lost* by preaching Christ and Him crucified. Stipend *one hundred pounds* a year. The advertiser does not pledge himself to answer every letter."

All of 'em bargain for a loud "voice:" you'd think, grandmother, the advertisements were for chorus-singers and not clergymen. And, grandmother, can you tell me what "a *moderate High Church view*" is? Is it moderate virtue—moderate honesty—moderate *truth*? Pray, tell me. Another advertiser wants "a pious and active curate," who will double his duty with "the tuition of the incumbent's sons." That incumbent has a good eye for a good pennyworth, depend upon it. At Bishops Lydeard a curate is tempted with "a neat little cottage," and "*almost* certainly the chaplaincy of an adjoining union," with "other considerations" (what can *they* be, grandmother?) which will make the salary "equivalent to £100 per annum." And for this he must be orthodox and married. Another curate is wanted in a "small parish in Berks," where "the duty is very light." What would the apostles have said to such an offer? A beneficed clergyman advertising from Camberwell, wishes for duty "in some agricultural and *picturesque part* of the north of England." A picturesque part! You see, it isn't every one who would like to preach

in the wilderness. Another curate required in Nottinghamshire : salary, £100 per annum. He must have the highest references for "gentlemanly manners," *as* "the vicar is resident." I suppose if the vicar was away, a second or third rate style would do well enough for the parishioners.

However, you'll be glad to learn that several of the advertisers profess to be "void of Tractarianism and *other* novelties." Just in the same way as they write up somewhere in Piccadilly, "The original brown bear."

Another clergyman "is desirous of meeting with an early appointment in town ;" and, grandmother, you may judge of the lengths this gentleman will go to preach Christianity and save human souls, when he adds, "No objection to the Surrey side." Isn't this good of him? Because, you know, grandmother, the opera, and the clubhouses, and the divans, and so forth, are none of 'em on the Surrey side. To be sure, there's the Victoria and Astley's—but they're low.

Now, grandmother, don't all these advertisements smell a little too much of trade—don't they, for your notions of the right thing, jingle a little too much with gold and silver? As I'm an honest cabman, though I knew I was reading all about the Church and her pious sons, yet somehow the advertisements did put me in mind of "Rowland's

Macassar," "Mechi's Magic Strops," and "Good stout Cobs to be disposed of."

I am, dear grandmother, your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

P.S.—I open my letter to tell you that the Bishop of Exeter has broken out again. A Mr Blunt of Helston *will* wear the surplice ; and the Bishop, like a bottle-holder at a fight, backs him in his doings. Do have more prayers put up for the Bishop.

LETTER X.—*To Samuel Hedgehog, Galantce Showman, Ratcliffe Highway.*

DEAR SAM,—I'm just come home from Hampstead, and so, while the matter's fresh in my mind, I sit down to write you a few lines. You have heard of the awful murder, of course. Well, I don't know : murder's a shocking thing, to be sure ; nobody can say it isn't ; and yet, after what I've seen to-day—Sunday, mind—it does almost seem to me as if people took a sort of pleasure in it. Bless you ! if you'd only seen the hundreds and hundreds of folks figged out in their very best to

enjoy a sight of the place where a man had been butchered, you'd have thought Haverstock Field—stained and cursed as it is with blood—a second Vauxhall at the least. I'm sure I've seen people going to Greenwich Fair with not half the pleasure in their faces. However, I'll tell you all about it.

I was called off the stand about eight this morning by a gentleman and lady, dressed, as I thought, for church. They're a little early, thought I, but that's their business. "Take us to Hampstead," said the gentleman; "and mind, as near to the murder as possible." "Do, my good man," said the lady. Bless you! to have looked at her you'd have thought she'd have fainted at the sound of murder. "Do, my good man," said she; "and make haste, for I wouldn't be too late for anything. Take care of these," said she to the gentleman, giving him a basket, "and mind you don't break it." Well, it's my business to drive a cab; so I said nothing, but started for Hampstead. Bless you! before I'd got half up Tottenham Court Road, it was no easy driving, I can tell you. The road swarmed! Up and down the New Road, through Camden Town, and right to Haverstock Hill—I never saw anything like it, except perhaps on the day they run for the Derby. Everybody seemed turned out to enjoy themselves—determined to have a holiday and no mistake.

Well, I drove as near as I could to the place, and then I got a boy to hold the horse, and got down and went along with my fare. If it didn't make me quite savage and sick, Sam, to see hundreds of fellows—well-dressed gentry, mind you—gaping and lounging about, and now poking the grass with their sticks, as if it was something precious because blood had been shed upon it, and now breaking bits of the trees about the place, I suppose to make toothpicks and cribbage-pegs of. And then there were fathers—precious fools!—bringing their children with them, boys and girls, as though they'd brought 'em to a stall of gingerbread nuts, where they might fill their bellies and be happy! But the worst of all, Sam, was to see the women. Lots of 'em nice, young, fair creatures, tender as if they were made of best wax—there they were running along and looking at the bushes and the grass, and talking of the blood and the death-struggle, just as if they were looking at and talking of the monkeys at the 'Logical Gardens. Well, the handsomest of 'em after a time looked to me no better than young witches—and that's the truth. Every minute I expected some of 'em to do a polka, they did after a time seem to enjoy themselves.

Well, all of a sudden I missed my fare. Looking about, I saw my gentleman go up to the brick

wall. Then he took a heavy hammer out of his pocket, and knocking away, split a brick, and then knocked it out of the wall. "This is something like," said he to me, twinkling his eye; "something to remember the murder by." And then he carefully wrapt the pieces of brick in a silk handkerchief, and put 'em in his breast-pocket, as if they'd been lumps of diamonds. I said nothing—but I could have kicked him. However, he hadn't done yet, for going to a part of the field, he said to his wife—for so she proved to be—"This is the place, Arabella; the very place: where's the pots?" Then the lady took three garden-pots from a basket, and then her husband, dropping upon his knees, turned up the earth with a large clasp-knife, and when he'd filled the pots, he dug up two or three daisy roots, and set 'em; his wife smiling and looking as happy all the while as if she'd got a new gown, or a new bonnet, or both. "Come," said the gentleman, squinting at the daisy roots, and twisting one of the pots in his hand, "this is what I call worth coming for. As I say, this is something to recollect a murder by. Humph!" and then he paused a bit, and looked very wishfully at the stile—"Humph! I should like a walking-stick out of that; but the police are so particular, I suppose they wouldn't suffer it. Come along, Arabella;" and securing the broken brick and the

daisy roots in the pots, my gentleman went back to the cab. "Now drive as fast as you can to the church," he said; "I wouldn't but be there for any money." Well, I never did drive through such a crowd, but at last I managed it; and at last—but no; I haven't patience enough to write any more upon this part of it. There was nothing wanted in and about the churchyard to make it a fair, except a few stalls and suchlike. It made me sick, Sam, to look upon this murder's holiday. I wish you'd have seen the Yorkshire Grey public-house! No sooner did they open the doors than there was as much scrambling as at any playhouse on boxing-night. Well, the landlord didn't make a little by his gin that day! Murder proved a good customer to him! And then to see the hundreds and hundreds struggling and pushing to get to the bar—to hear 'em laughing and shouting—and seeing 'em tossing off their liquor,—upon my life, Sam, there was a mob of well-dressed, well-to-do Englishmen, that, considering what had brought them there, wasn't half so decent as a crowd of Zealand savages.

Cricketing's an English sport—so is single-stick—so are bowls—and so are nine-pins—and after what I've seen to-day, so, I'm sure of it, is murder. For my part, it does seem a little hard to hang the murderer himself, when it appears that he gives by

his wickedness so much enjoyment to his fellow-subjects.

Well, Sam, I'm now come to the marrow of my letter, and it's this. I do think, if you will only take pains, and have all the murders of the year nicely got up, you may make a capital penn'orth of the lot with your show at Christmas. Well, lords and ladies make a scrimmage for it at police-courts; and respectable, pious people take in newspapers for the very best likenesses of prisoners and cut-throats. I'm sure you'd get custom—if the thing was well done—ay, “of the nobility, gentry, and public in general.”

Now do, Sam, take my advice. Depend upon it, the pop'lar taste sets in for blood; and so, instead on winter's nights a-going about with your old-fashioned cry of “Gallantee Show!” sing out “Mur-der!” and your fortune's made. And so no more from your cousin and wellwisher,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XI.—*To Chickweed, Widow, Penzance.*

DEAR MRS CHICKWEED,—It has given me a vast deal of concern that you should have been frightened by the ignorant reports in the news-

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papers. Don't believe a word they say on the matter. It isn't true that the churchyard where you laid Solomon Chickweed before you went back to your native place, is to be shut up—the tombstone to be taken down—and all future burials forbidden. It's very true that St Clement's Churchyard is in the middle of the Strand; but that's no reason why folks shouldn't be buried there, twenty deep, if the sexton can only as much as sprinkle 'em with a little grave-dust. Parliament knows better than to interfere in the matter. To be sure, there's a great hubbub about public health; but what's public health in comparison with church fees? Some meddlesome people have been writing a report about the burying at St Clement's, and the report says, "Thus a diluted poison is given in exchange from the dead to the living in one of the most frequented thoroughfares in the metropolis." So, you see, your late husband—poor fellow! he'd have been sorry to think it—may at this moment be helping to kill some of his oldest and best neighbours.

But what of that? Look at what is called the moral good these churchyards do in the middle of London. What wicked people we cockneys should be without 'em! Isn't it plain that they keep a check upon us? that they make us think of life and death? that they often give us,

so to speak, a pull up when we are about to stumble? Look at the state of all the tradespeople in the neighbourhood of such churchyards as St Giles' and St Clement's and St Bride's, and a hundred others, within a few yards of shop counters. Why, they're all pattern folks. They have all so constantly death in their eyes, that it makes 'em honest to their own disadvantage. Think, too, what it is for folks from the tops of omnibuses now and then to see funerals going on in the highways of London. Do you suppose that it doesn't do them a world of good? To be sure; and that's the reason the rectors and so forth of the churches in London have set their faces against the new-fangled cemeteries, where people are buried in quiet, with nobody but the mourners to see the ceremony. Don't, Mrs Chickweed, think it's for the fees: certainly not; it's all for the sake of the souls of the giddy, sinful people of London. It's true enough that what is called the "effluvia" from these churchyards may poison the bodies of the living, but what of that when it helps to keep the soul so sweet? I'm called away, and so for the present can add no more. If, however, at any time they think of disturbing Solomon, depend upon it, for old acquaintance' sake, you will hear from me. Till then, I am your wellwisher,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XII.—*To Isaac Moss, Slop-seller,
Portsmouth.*

DEAR ISAAC, — I don't know whether Portsmouth has any aldermen, but if it has, I hope you'll get into a gown outright. The thing's as good as done. What poor George the Third, Lord Eldon, and such folk think of it, there's no saying, but in a twinkling a Jew may be an alderman! Even the Bishop of London swallows the measure, although shuddering at it, as if it was a black draught. However, Isaac, what I write to you about is this. Mr Ashurst, in the common council of London, spoke about the Jews; and after him the Duke of Cambridge in the House of Lords. Both of 'em gave their reasons for what is called Hebrew emancipation; and droll it is to consider 'em one with the other. Here they are:—

MR ASHURST.

“No man was consulted as to who should be his parents; what constitution, organisation, or temperament he should receive; what should be his climate, his colour, or country; what should be his language; what literature should influence him; what education he should receive; nor as to what general external circumstances

DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

“I have had occasion for some time to know the good which persons professing the Jewish religion have done; and particularly with reference to the different charities to which I belong; and I can certainly say that it is to them that we owe a great deal, *and that they contribute* a very large portion to the

should surround him. They saw and knew as a fact *that religion was geographical*. If a man was born in Turkey, he was a Mahometan ; in Africa, a pagan ; in India, he was one of the multitudinous castes of sects which prevailed there ; and in a Christian country a Christian. Why, then, for a matter *which was independent to himself*, should man lose in civil rights ? That religion which was true would ultimately prevail, but not by persecution."

funds of the charities over which I have the honour of presiding. Two of the individuals whose names were mentioned in the speech of my noble and learned friend, on a former occasion, are personally known to myself. One was formerly the High Sheriff of the county of Kent—Mr Solomons ; and I can bear witness to the good he has done. Also there Sir Moses Montefiore, . . . learning what was the object of the meeting I was about to attend, *he gave me a very handsome sum*, which he desired me to present. I will not mention what the sum was, for it would be a violation of good taste to do so."

Observe this, Isaac : Mr Ashurst argues upon what are called broad, wide, and benevolent principles. He would give liberty to the Jew because the man was born a Jew ; because he couldn't choose his father and mother, his creed or colour. It is his fortune to be a Jew, as it may be the fortune of the Bishop of London to be a Christian. Therefore the common councilman would give him equal freedom with the rest. Now, the royal Duke would emancipate the Jew because "he contributes a large portion" to the funds of Christian charities. With the Duke, the Jew buys the favour with hard cash ! Sir Moses ought to be an alder-

man, because he gave the Duke "a very handsome sum" for a charitable meeting!

The Jew touches the common councilman through his reason, his sense of justice; but the Hebrew moves the royal Duke purely through his breeches-pocket. "We owe a great deal to the Jews," says Cambridge; "and *therefore* they ought to be freed." Now suppose, Isaac, that the Jews had been poor; that they had never subscribed handsome sums; could the Duke, according to his own logic, have lifted up his voice in their behalf? I fear not.

Thus, then, it is, Isaac, Mr Ashurst and men of his school give liberty as a right—the Duke of Cambridge and such reasoners sell it.

There's a good deal, Isaac, to think of in what Mr Ashurst says; that no man chose his colour or his country. Only suppose now, if Sir Robert Peel had been born one of the—what d'ye call 'em?—the spinning dervishes, whose whole religion is said to be in doing nothing but going round, and round, and round! Why, one can't help thinking that Sir Robert would have gone round with any of 'em.

Just suppose, too, Sir James Graham born a Chinaman. Instead of dining off Christian beef and mutton, don't you think he'd have eaten rats glazed with rice? and now, all the world knows,

a rat's a thing he can't abide to think of. Only think, Isaac, how many white-skinned public folks, if they'd been only born in Africa, would have been *born* as black—yes, quite as black—as if they could now be turned inside out. Is it any merit of Lord Brougham's that he wasn't born to play with knives and balls like Ramo Samee? On the other hand, is poor Ramo to be despised because he hasn't the salary of a shelved chancellor? I should think not.

There's capital wisdom in what Mr Ashurst says—the best of wisdom. And let us hope that even lords and bishops will by-and-by come to understand it.

And so no more from your old friend,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XIII.—*To Mrs Hedgehog of New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—You ought to be in England just now, we're in such a pleasant pucker. The Church is in danger again! I have myself known her twenty times in peril, but now she really is at the very edge of destruction.

You know there's a place called Maynooth College, where they bring up Roman Catholic

priests for the use of Ireland. Well, there's a lot of folks who will have it that this college is not a bit better than certain tanks I've read of in India, where they breed young crocodiles to be worshipped by people who know no better. Sir Robert Peel intends to give £26,000 a year to this place—it used to have an annual grant of £9000—that the scholars may be increased in number, and that they may be better taught and more comfortably boarded and lodged. Well, the members of the Church of England—although here and there they have grumbled at the matter, and have called the Pope names that pass in small-change at Billingsgate—have been mute as fish compared to the Dissenters. It is they who have fought the fight; it is they who have raised the price of parchment by darkening the House of Commons with clouds of petitions. It is they who have risen to a man, and have patted the British Lion, and twisted his tail, and goaded him—as you'd set a bulldog on a cat—to tear Popery to pieces.

But, dear grandmother, don't be afraid. Before you get my next letter, with all this noise and bouncing, we shall have settled down as quiet as stale sodawater. And then for the Church being in danger — bless you! the very folks who are now holding up their hands, thinking it will drop to pieces (from its very richness, I suppose, like

some of your plum-puddings)—why, they 'll sleep quietly in their beds, and take their glass of wine and chicken with their usual appetite, until the Church shall be once more in trouble, once more to give 'em a pleasant, healthful shaking,—and then once more to let 'em easily down again. I've known some girls who've thought they best showed how tender they were by always going into fits: well, I do think that, just like 'em, some people believe they best show their religion when they scream and foam at the mouth about it.

It's a settled belief with a good many pious people, who are as careful of their religion as of their best service of china—only using it on holiday occasions, for fear it should be chipped or flawed in working-day wear—it's a belief with them that a Papist is a sort of human toad, an abomination in the form of man. Dr Croly has surely a notion of this sort. A few days ago he appeared on Covent Garden stage (I think his first appearance there since his comedy of "Pride shall have a Fall"), and called upon the Lord, with thunder and lightning and the sword, to kill His enemies—meaning Roman Catholics! And then the Doctor showed how Providence had punished all naughty kings who had cast an eye of favour on the Pope. Capping this, the Doctor more than hinted that George the Fourth, the first gentleman

in Europe—for he had a greater number of coats than all the rest of the kings put together—was somewhat suddenly called from his loving people because he had passed the bill that 'mancipated the Catholics. Well, when we think how many Catholics there are in the world—when we remember the millions of 'em scattered about the earth—it does appear to me a little bold in a worm of a man (whether the said worm wears clergyman's black or not) praying to the Lord to destroy, crush, burn, whole nations of men and women because he wasn't born to think as they do. But so it is with some folks very proud indeed of their Christianity. Hear them talk and pray, and you would think that Satan himself, the father of wickedness, had been the creator of ninety-nine men out of a hundred, and it was the pure, elect, and lucky hundredth that religiously begged for the destruction of the ninety-nine. But all the noise is about the largeness of the sum—the £26,000. The £9000 was every year quietly voted—for I call the cackling of two or three Parliament geese as nothing—and still the Church stands unshaken on her foundation. By this it would seem that with some folks it is the money that wrong costs, and not the wrong itself, that is objectionable. Thinking after this fashion, drunkenness is not to be thought a vice if it be drunkenness gratis; it, however, increases in

enormity with the increase of its price : thus gin-drunkenness is merely wrong, but burgundy-drunkenness is infamous to the last degree. Haven't I read somewhere of an old Greek philosopher—if some of these chaps had lived in these times, they 'd now and then have found themselves at the police-office—who felt mightily disposed for what was immoral, and only held back at the purchase-money ! I think he said he wouldn't "buy repentance at so dear a price." Now, if he could have had the sin at a cheap pennyworth, the sin itself had been light, indeed. It's the weight of money that makes the weight of crime.

But I suppose Dr Croly, Mr M'Neile, and such folks—who seem to read their Bibles by the blue light of brimstone—believe that the extra money given to the Roman Catholic priests of Ireland will only be so much powder and shot with which they may bring down Protestants. Well, if money is to make converts, what has the Irish Protestant Church been about, that has always had a full money-bag at her girdle, and more than that—plenty of leisure to reclaim the fallen ? She has always had a golden crook whereby to bring stray lambs into the fold, and yet has added nothing to her flock.

Now, according to my opinion, the folks who abuse Maynooth ought rather to feel glad that

money is to be given to her priests, seeing what an abundance of money, and good things purchased by money, have done for the Irish Protestant Church. It has become slow as it has become fat. Stuff even a pulpit-cushion with bank-notes, and it is strange to see how religion will sleep upon it. And therefore people ought to rejoice that the Catholic is to be made a little comfortable in worldly matters! Excellent, worthy Churchmen, who can command the sports of the field and all the pleasures of the table, are not the busy, troublesome folks to go about converting their benighted neighbours! And though the Maynooth pupils may not—like their beneficed rivals—keep fox-hounds, and enjoy the dearest turtle, pine-apples, and all that, they will not, I think, be in after-life more dangerous to the Protestant Church, because when at college they slept not more than two in a bed.

But there's a sort of people in the world that can't bear making any progress. I wonder they even walk, unless they walk backwards! I wonder they don't refuse to go out when there's a full moon, and all out of love and respect for that "ancient institution," the old one. But there always were such people, grandmother—always will be. When lucifers first came in, how many old women, stanch old souls—many of 'em worthy

to be members of Parliament—stood by their matches and tinder-boxes, and cried out “No surrender!” And how many of these old women, disguised in male attire, every day go about at public meetings professing to be ready to die for any tinder-box question that may come up! Yes, ready, quite ready to die for it; all the readier, perhaps, because dying for anything of the sort’s quite gone out of fashion.

Even Sir James Graham says the time is gone by for ill-using Ireland. “The time is gone by!” And yet how many men before Sir James, have stood up and declared *their* time—the time “gone by”—was the best time possible for Ireland, that what was doing for her could not be improved; and having thundered this, have sat down, secure in a majority that has voted for the evil to continue! What a long time it is before men in power will learn to call things by their proper names! What a time it takes to teach ministers to call evil, evil—and lies, lies!

Sir Robert Peel has behaved in the handsomest manner in the matter. He says it is by no means his wish to rob the Whigs of the gratitude of Ireland for the Maynooth measure. Certainly not: they, no doubt, could have carried it had he joined them; this, however, he would not do: he has, however, no objection that they should join

him. And so they may have the gratitude, and he the patronage and power. They have helped him to open the oyster; he swallows the fish, and they are quite welcome to the shells.

It is quite a delight to read Sir Robert's Parliament speeches. Did you ever talk to a man who seemed never to hear what you said, but only thought what he should say to pass for an answer? who seemed as though none of your words entered his ears, but all slid down his cheeks? I've met with such people, and Sir Robert Peel—when I read his Maynooth speeches—does remind me of 'em. What a way he has of talking *down the side* of a speech, and never answering it direct! I hardly wonder that the playhouses don't flourish, when there's such capital actors of all sorts in the Houses of Parliament. I had just been reading an account of two or three more Maynooth meetings, where some of the speakers talked about the true and the false religion, as though themselves had a sole and certain knowledge of what was true—what false: I had just been reading all this, when my eye fell upon a paragraph headed "Lord Rosse's Telescope." Lord Rosse, you must know, is one of those noblemen who do not pull off knockers, knock down cabmen, and always take a front seat at the Old Bailey on a trial for murder. No: he has been making an enormous telescope;

and the paragraph I write of says: "Marvellous rumours are afloat respecting the astronomical discoveries made by Lord Rosse's monster telescope. It is said that Regulus, instead of being a sphere, is ascertained to be a disc; and stranger still, that the nebula in the belt of Orion is a universal system—a sun with planets moving round it, as the earth and her fellow-orbs move round our glorious luminary."

Now, at one time, a man might have been burnt alive for taking it upon himself to say that Regulus was not a sphere but a disc; and that Orion (I know nothing about him, save and except that a marvellously fine poem, price one farthing, was lately published with his name) did not wear in his belt any nebula, but a universal system! La, grandmother! when I read of these things, I feel a mixture of pain and pity for men that, instead of having their hearts and spirits tuned by the harmony that God is always playing to them (and they won't hear it, the leathern-eared sinners!) think of nothing but swearing that one thing's a disc, and the other a nebula—when they only look through small glasses, wanting the great telescope to show 'em the real truth!—And so no more from your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG,

P.S. — I blush for myself, that I had almost forgotten to tell you that Dr Wolff has come back safe and sound from the innermost part of India, where he went to try to save the lives of two Englishmen, Stoddart and Conolly. It was like going into a tiger's den to take the flesh from the wild beast. And yet the stout-hearted man went! Such an act makes us forget the meanness and folly of a whole generation! Captain Grover—a heart of gold that—has published a book on the matter called “The Bokhara Victims.” As no doubt the New York publishers—in their anxiety to diffuse knowledge—have already published it for some five cents, do not fail to read it. As for Dr Wolff, I wonder what Englishmen will do for him? If he'd come back from India after cutting twenty thousand throats, why, he might have had a round of dinners, diamond-hilted swords, wine-coolers as big as buckets, and so on; as it is, I fear nothing *can* be done for him. However, we shall see.

LETTER XIV.—*To Mrs Hedgehog of New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—England's still above water: the sea doesn't yet roll over Dover cliffs;

nevertheless, the Maynooth Grant that I wrote to you about, is gone through the House of Commons, and in a very few weeks the Papists, as you love to call them, will have the money. Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Mr Plumptre, and others of their kidney, may possibly for a month or two appear in the streets in sackcloth and ashes, and with beards like Jew rabbis—first to show their respect for the departed constitution; but after a decent time of mourning, they will, no doubt, be open to consolation, and take their dinners with their usual appetite. I shouldn't wonder if in six months the Rev. Mr M'Neile (of sulphurous principles) consents to eat and drink like anybody else; and shall be by no means surprised if Dr Croly is found to have regained, at least, all the flesh that anxiety and grief for the Church in danger have so deplorably deprived him of. It's wonderful to think how certain saints and patriots get lean and fat as sudden as rabbits! Wonderful to think, when the whole world, according to their declaration, has gone to bits, how well and contentedly they still continue to live upon the pieces! But, dear grandmother, what a blessing is Exeter Hall! What a safety-valve it is for the patriotism, and indignation, and scorn, and hatred—and all other sorts of public virtues—that but for it, or some such place, would fairly burst so many excellent folks, if they couldn't go

and relieve their swelling souls in a bit of talk ! As it is, they speechify and are saved ! Only suppose there had been no place whereat worthy people could have abused the Maynooth Grant—no place wherein to air their own particular Christianity to the condemnation of the religion of everybody else—what would have been the consequence ? Why, they must have exploded—burst like the frog in the fable. Day after day Mr Wakley and his brother coroners would have been sitting on the body of some respectable saint and patriot—day after day we should have read the verdict, “Died by retention of abuse !” Happily, while we have Exeter Hall, we are spared these national calamities.

As I know, grandmother, your natural tenderness for all that concerns the bishops, I must—at the risk of bringing on your cholic—inform you that they are again in danger. Even the *Morning Post* is beginning to neglect 'em ! Some newspaper—I don't know which—has proposed, as the only true remedy for the distress of the country, that there should be a greater number of bishops. Now this, at the first blush, seems a capital notion. But only mark what follows. The writer would multiply episcopal blessings, by “distributing the revenues of the present sees, as they fall vacant, among a greater number of bishops.” And the

Morning Post doesn't at once put down this infamous proposal. Only imagine the Bishop of London slit into half-a-dozen bishops—one Henry of Exeter made twenty Henrys—just as you make bundles of small wood from one large piece! After giving utterance to this wickedness, the writer goes on to think "it impossible that the spiritual Lords should continue to be members of the Legislature after ceasing to be rich men." And this the *Post* calls "no singular opinion. For such is the habitual association of power and station in this country with wealth, that perhaps nine out of every ten persons that one might meet walking along the Strand, would say with this writer that unless a prelate had his thousands a year, and his carriage, and his servants, and his grandeur of accessories, he could not properly take a part in counselling the Government, or assisting to make laws in the Upper House of Parliament!" And if the people think so, I've heard it said that the bishops have themselves to thank for such belief, seeing that the world often hears more of their carriages and servants than of the humility and tenderness that were shown by the apostles. The *Post*, however, to my amazement, is for stripping Lambeth and Fulham of much of their finery. Yes: the *Post* absolutely says: "We protest against the opinion that, without the wealth, the worth of the bishops in the

House of Lords would be nought. Nay, we can conceive the possibility of the influence of learning, and eloquence, and venerable earnestness, being *even greater when disassociated* from wealth and worldly interests!" Only imagine, grandmother, the Bishop of London walking down to the House of Lords leaning on a horn-tipped staff, and not rolled along in his cushioned carriage, with servant in purple livery to let down the steps for him! Isn't the picture terrible? Isn't it what they call revolutionary? And yet the *Morning Post*—as coldly as this present month of May—can see the possibility of a Bishop of Exeter being cut into ten or twenty bishoplings, and never swoon, or even as much as call out for the hartshorn! Who is the revolutionist now?

The month has been a dull month: politics, and all that, have been as stupid as the weather. The trees and bushes have come out, to be sure; but only, as it would seem, from a matter of habit—because it's May by the almanac. However, the Duke of Newcastle has very kindly tried to give us a fillip, as I've heard somebody say in some play or the other, "Orson is endowed with reason!" We've had two letters from Clumber! You must know that in the British Museum there are two or three mummies of Egyptian kings, they say, who lived I don't know how many thousand years ago.

Now just suppose, grandmother, that one of these mummies—with his brains out, be it remembered—should have suddenly got up, and written a letter or two to Mehemet Ali and his Egyptians, thinking 'em the self-same Egyptians that used to worship crocodiles and ibises, and make gods of the leeks and onions that grew in their gardens,—suppose the British Museum mummy had done this—well, the thing would have done no more than the political mummy of Clumber; would have made just the same mistake as his well-meaning Grace the Duke of Newcastle. “Forget all you’ve been learning for the last thirty years, at least; give up the wickedness of steam, forego the iniquity of railroads, be content with sailing-smacks and stage-coaches, repeal the Reform Bill, repeal Catholic Emancipation—in a word, wipe everything from your minds, gathered there since the good old times when George the Third was King!—come out again in the pig-tails and shoe-buckles of that blissful reign—and I, Duke of Newcastle, am ready to march with you! I am prepared, at every risk, to be hero of the back-step!”

As yet, I have heard of nobody who has joined the Duke’s standard; but if recruits should come in, I’ll let you know.

It is not unlikely, grandmother, that you may have a few Highland families sent over to America,

as they are now being carefully "weeded out" from their native places by certain landlords, who think it better and more Christian-like to turn their lands into sheep-walks than to suffer them to be tenanted by mere men, women, and children. "Weeding" is a nice word, isn't it? it so capitally describes the worth of the thing rooted out. The poor man is, of course, the "weed;" the rich is the "lily," that "neither toils nor spins." And just now, it seems, certain places in the Highlands are overgrown with this rank, foul weed—this encumbrance to the soil—this one human thing, worse than thistle or nettle. What a beautiful world this would be, wouldn't it?—if this weed of poverty was cut up, burnt, destroyed, got rid of any way! It's a dreadful nuisance; and yet it *will* spring up, like groundsel or any other worthless thing! And strange to say, the sun will shine upon it, and the dews of heaven descend upon it, all the same as if it was one of the aforesaid lilies, full of light and breathing sweetness. Odd, isn't it, that the sky should shine so impartially on both?—Your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.



LETTER XV.—*To Miss Kitty Hedgehog, Milliner,
Philadelphia.*

DEAR KITTY,—If I haven't written before this, it is because I've had nothing worth ink and paper to send you. I know that you've a mind above politics, and—may you be pardoned for the lightness!—can sleep like a cat in the sun, no matter how much the Church may be in danger. When, however, there's anything stirring among silks and satins, why, then your woman's spirit is up, and all the milliner is roused within you. Knowing this, Kitty, I shall treat you with a few lines about a Powdered Ball we've lately had at Court; when everybody, out of compliment, I suppose, to what is called the wisdom of their ancestors, went dressed like their great grandfathers and grandmothers. A huge comfort this to great people in the shades! Dear Queen Charlotte was once again at Court, very flatteringly represented by a fine piece of point-lace worn by the blessed Victoria herself. And dukes, and lords, and generals—all of 'em sleeping in family lead—were once more walking minuets and dancing "Sir Roger de Coverly." Everybody, for a time, lived more than a hundred years ago; and, as I'm told, felt very happy at going backward even for one night. To go back is

with many high folks the greatest proof of wisdom; and therefore, among such people, the Powdered Ball was considered a glorious stride in the right direction. Only imagine the rapture of a Duke of Newcastle, living, even in fancy, for a few hours, at any time from 1715 to 1745; a time when there was no Reform Bill, no steam-engines, no railways, no cheap books! Think of the delight of many old gentlemen believing themselves their own grandfathers; quite away from these revolutionary days, and living again in "good old times"! I've heard—though I don't answer for it—that two or three of 'em were so carried away by the thought, that, to keep up the happiness as long as they could, they went to bed in their clothes, high-heeled shoes and all. At this very moment, they *do* say Lord —— is still in his embroidered coat and smalls, with a wig like a white cloud upon him. He declares 1715 is such a "good old time" that nothing shall make him go on again to 1845. He has ordered flambeaux for his servants, and now and then talks about going to Ranelagh. Moreover, by people quite worthy of belief, it is feared his delusion, as they call it, is spreading, as they call it, amongst certain high folks; many of 'em thinking themselves a hundred years back, and wanting to make Acts of Parliament in the spirit of that good old time. See, Kitty, how a Powdered

Ball may turn the highest heads—even the nobs of the country!

The ladies were, of course, all jewelled, and very fine. Oh, what a fortune some of 'em would have been to a poor man—with their stomachers! But, Kitty, there is one odd thing at these masks and balls: how is it that young ladies—with names as white as snow—sometimes take the character, fly-spotted and damaged as they are, of sinful love-birds? You, Kitty, being a woman, can explain this; but to me, one of the ignorant rough sex, it does seem odd that a pure young lady should dress herself as Nelly Gwynne, or any other person of the sort, when the aforesaid pure lady would squeak—and, no doubt, very proper—at the living creature as if it was a toad. Can you explain this, Kitty? Do they take such characters, just as they put black patches on their cheeks, to bring out their own white all the stronger? Or is it that there's a sort of idle daring in it, just as children play with fire, though they never mean to burn themselves? I can't make it out; but how should I expect it—I, a poor, weak, ignorant man—how should I unriddle a creature that's puzzled Solomon? Of course there was an account of the dresses. Well, when I opened the *Morning Post*, and saw whole columns built o' nothing but velvets and satins, and all that, if I didn't grin—like a clown

through a collar for a new hat—at the vanity of life.

“Look here,” says I to Bill Fisher, that was sitting in the Spotted Lion—“look at the conceit of these folks,” says I, “who think that all the world’s to stand still a-reading about their ‘gimp Brandenburghs and buttons’—their ‘buttons and frogs’—their ‘blue facings and turnback’—and such mountebankery.” “It is quite beneath us as men,” says Bill; “not at all like lords of the creation. Now, I can forgive the women—poor little souls!—for having all their flounces and puffings put in the paper. It’s nat’ral for them.” “Why nat’ral?” says I. “Why,” says Bill, “because they know it makes one another savage. Bless you, that’s what they do it for—and nothin’ else.” And then you should have heard how he laughed as he spelt out the paper. “Look here, now,” says he, “here was a lady with a dress looped with bouquets of pink roses; skirt of rich green satin, trimmed with flounces of point-lace and bouquets of roses; white satin shoes with high heels, green rosettes, with diamonds in the centre. Hair powdered, and ornamented with roses and diamonds. Now, isn’t it dreadful, Juniper, that people are to be stopped over their honest pint of porter with stuff like this? What’s ‘satin shoes with high heels’ to all the ’versal world? But then, as I say, the women do it to

make one another savage. I've often thought, since they like so to print in the papers what clothes they wear, that at the same time they might let the world know what books they read, what pictures they look at—in fact, what sort of dresses they put on their minds. But, to be sure, this would make nobody savage." This is what Bill Fisher says; but mark, Kitty, I'm not quite of his way of thinking; though, after all, it does seem odd that a young lady should think it worth while to put all her clothes in print for the world to spell over.

But the Ball will have done a great deal of good in making us look a hundred years back. How I should like to see the thing tried upon a grand scale! Suppose that everybody in London, just for four-and-twenty hours, out of compliment to the great example set by the Court, should live as if it was 1745. Wouldn't it be droll? Droll to have the gas out, and set up oil-tinklers! Droll to make the new police put on drab coats, and call the hours like that "venerable institution," the watch! Droll to have all the rail-trains stopt, and only book passengers for York by the waggon! Droll to stop the steam-boats on the river, the omnibuses in the streets; making folks move about in nothing but wherries, hackney-coaches, and sedan-chairs! Droll, too,

would it be, to start for Gravesend in the tilt-boat on a two days' voyage! Well, I hope that all this will be brought about; for if all the folks in London were made to live only four-and-twenty hours of a hundred years ago, I do think that for the rest of their lives they'd shut their mouths about those precious good old times, that some people do now so like to cackle about.

There's no doubt that the Powdered Ball has been a very fine affair; but the Ball of next season will be the grand thing. A nobleman's footman, as I last night drove, told me that at the Ball of next year all true folks will wear supposed dresses from the time of 1915 to 1954—that is, about a hundred years ahead. There's a good many opinions as to what they'd be. Some folks declare they'll be as plain as drab, and some that we shall have all gone back again to the fashion of the painted Britons, as you see 'em in the "History of England." By that time, it's thought, soldiers' uniforms will have gone quite out—the electric gun and such nick-nacks having killed War, body and bones. Howsomever, 'twill be odd to see how people's fancy will dress themselves for a hundred years on; there'll be more cleverness in that, if well done, than in wearing the precise coat and petticoat of your grandfather and grandmother.—Your loving brother,

JUNIPER HEDEGHOG.

LETTER XVI.—*To Mrs Hedgehog, New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—The Maynooth Grant is granted, and the British Lion has once more gone to sleep. When either Sir Culling Smith, Mr M'Neile, or Dr Croly shall pinch his tail and make him roar again, you shall have due notice of the danger. I think, however, that the Lion is safe to sleep until next May, when, of course, he'll again be stirred up for the folks at Exeter Hall. In the meantime he must be tired, very drowsy, after the speeches that have been made at him; so let him sleep on.

Yes, Maynooth College has got the new grant; nevertheless, to the astonishment of the Duke of Newcastle and company, the sun rises every morning as if nothing had happened; and, so hard does the love of shillings make men's hearts, London tradesmen still smile behind their counters, never thinking that their tills are threatened with an earthquake. Newcastle and other peers—just out of consolation to their shades—have written what's called a "Protest" against the grant; and a hundred years hence, when England is blown to atoms by the measure, very comfortable it will be to their ghosts, as they walk among the ruins, to see men

reading the aforesaid "Protest," and hear them crying, "A prophet!" "a prophet!"

And now, grandmother, comes the Roman Catholic Bishops. They won't have Peel's plan of education unless all the masters are to be of their own faith. For they say "the Roman Catholic pupils could not attend the lectures on history, logic, metaphysics, moral philosophy, geology, or anatomy, without exposing their faith or morals to imminent danger—*unless a Roman Catholic professor* shall be appointed for each of those chairs."

You see, the lecturer on history, if a Protestant, might be making Queen Mary—Bloody Mary, as I was taught to call her at day-school—a very cruel wretch, indeed; whereas the Queen Mary of the Catholic might be a very nice woman, who never could abide fagots, and never knew where Smithfield was. And then for logic (you must, as I've said before, look dictionary for hard words); logic, it seems, is a matter of religion. What's logic to a Protestant isn't to a Catholic, or a Mahometan, or a Chinese! In the same way, I suppose, that a straight line in London would be what they call a curve in Dublin, and perhaps a whole circle at Canton. And then for "geology" and "anatomy," why, we all know that there's nothing certain in anatomy; that it's all a matter of faith. Thus, if a Catholic anatomist lectured, we'll say, upon

the body of a Protestant pluralist, he might, out of blindness, declare that the said body never had a single atom of heart ; that such pluralists always lived without the article. While on the other side, the real Protestant lecturer, discussing on the self-same *corcup*, might declare that it was all heart, like a summer cabbage ! “ Professors’ chairs ! ” when I read these things, I somehow do think of the baby-chair that I used to be set up in to take my meals, with a stick run through the arms to keep me from tumbling out, the talk is so childish !

You ask me about your pet, the Bishop of Exeter. Well, the clergy of his diocese have just suffered what’s called his “ charge ; ” a charge, grandmother, in which the Bishop generally contrives to put in a lot of small-shot to pepper about him right and left. As usual, he talked a good deal about himself ; making Exeter out such a soft gentle person—such a lump of Christian butter—that in this hot weather it’s wonderful he hasn’t melted long ago. Ha, grandmother ! what a lawyer was spoiled in that bishop ! what a brain he has for cobwebs ! How he drags you along through sentence after sentence—every one a dark passage—until your head swims, and you can’t see your finger close to your nose ! He talked about this Puseyite stuff—this play-acting of the Church—for I don’t know how long ; but whether he very

much likes it or very much hates it, it's more than any cabman's brains can make out. I never read one of Exeter's charges, that I don't think of a sharp lawyer quite spoiled; but this last is a greater tangle than all. He talked a great deal about "the apostolical succession," the truth of which he would defend. How I should like to hear him trace himself—Henry of Exeter—*upwards!* He then came to the new Bill that was to take the right of divorce out of the hands of the Church. He said, "Let the *Liberalism* of the age be content with what it had already achieved. It was enough for one generation that men and women might be coupled together in a Registrar's Office, with as total an absence of all religious sanction as if one huckster were coupled up in partnership with another." Here the Bishop's right enough, no doubt. For if the Bishops' Court loses cases of divorce, what lots of fees go from them to the mere lawyers! A wedding-ring and a licence are things almost dog-cheap; but, O grandmother! what a lot of money it takes to break that ring!—what a heap of cash to tear up the licence! and that's the reason that divorce, like green peas at Christmas, can only be afforded by the rich. Next, the Bishop had a fling at what he called "the unhappy beings who went to mechanics' institutes and lecture-rooms." He said they wanted "the

discipline of the heart, and the chastening influence of true religion." I'm an ignorant cabman, grandmother; but if so many "millions," as the Bishop said, want this, I must ask, What do we pay the Church for? If so many of us are no better, as Exeter said, than "any of the wildest savages who devoured one another in New Zealand," for what, in the name of pounds, shillings, and pence, do we pay church-rates? Why don't the bishops and the high preachers of the Church come more among us? Why, thinking of "the apostolical succession," don't they copy more than they do the fishermen and tentmakers who are their forefathers? I can't help asking this, though, as I said, I know I'm an ignorant cabman.

The Bishop, however, after scolding a good deal, tried to end mildly and like a Christian. I've read at some bookstall of an Indian leaf. One side of it acts as a blister; then take it off, turn it, and the other side serves for the salve. The Bishop of Exeter, to my mind, always tries to make his charge a leaf of this sort; though I must say it, one side is generally stronger than the other—better for blistering than healing.—So no more from your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XVII.—*To Michael Hedgehog, Hong-Kong.*

DEAR BROTHER,—You'll be glad to hear that at last Ministers have remembered there's such a man in the world as Sir Henry Pottinger. The Queen has sent her compliments to Parliament, commanding a pension for him. We've given him £1500 a year for life; to my mind a shabby sum. La! Michael, only think how those six clerks of Chancery Lane, with their thousands a year—the chaps who had nothing to do but to play tricks with what they call equity—only think of them retired with a pension, every one of 'em living like a pot-bellied mouse in a ripe Stilton! How they must turn up their noses at poor Sir Henry! He has opened, I may say, a new world, for rivers of gold to flow out of it into the banks of Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow—I can't tell where. And he gets £1500 a year! I think we gave something more than that to Lord Keane for blowing up a pair of gates. But then folks turn a better penny upon war than peace. Blood and fire, and misery of all kinds, are more profitable than treaties of trade, no matter how glorious. The sword—the bloodier the better, too—weighs down the goose-quill; however, Sir Henry has a reward of some sort, and I'm heartily glad of it. May he live a

hundred years—and his heart be as green as laurel when his head's as white as cotton !!

But I'm coming to another part of the business. Sir J. C. Hobhouse, who, after all, has not lost his speech, as was for a long time supposed, lifted up his voice for Sir Henry. What do you think he said? "If he" (Sir Henry, mind) "were refused the reward now asked, the result would be this: he was only a lieutenant-colonel, although he had the brevet of major-general, and he would be obliged to leave England; *he could not live here.*" At this the House cheered, and I'm afraid, Mike, Hobhouse spoke the truth. As I'm an honest cabman who never takes less than his fare, if I didn't blush like a poppy when I read this. Why, what a shabby, mean, outside set of folks we must be! Supposing Sir Henry had not got this pension—supposing that, wanting to stay in England, he had lived in a smallish house, had not given grand parties, but, content with the thoughts of the great things he had done, he had jogged on plainly and humbly, would folks have looked down upon him? Would the hicky do-nothings, born to their tens of thousands a year, have forgotten all about the Chinese peace and ransom, and tremendous trade opened by Sir Henry, unless they saw him in a crack carriage, and knew that he lived in a first-rate mansion? Wouldn't it have been enough for them to know

that a great and good head—one of the heads that rule the world, though the world won't acknowledge it, at least until the aforesaid head may be rolled about by boys in the churchyard—that such a head had all its laurels about it, even though sometimes it went under a cotton umbrella? Wouldn't they have acknowledged this? No, Michael; no, no, no! The great man, in the eyes of our English world, would have been lost in the smallness of his income.

Pull down Apsley House, deprive the Duke of Wellington of his fortune, let him for three months be seen as a general living at a club upon nothing but his half-pay, and it's my belief that in three months after that some folks would more than doubt whether he ever won Waterloo. I once read of a Roman who was called from his turnips to save his country. What a small fellow he'd have seemed among us! We never could have understood a hero upon turnips alone. No; with us Cincinnatus must have had a fine leg of South-down to his vegetables, butter and capers, and above all things, a silver fork. I'm called for a fare, so yours in haste, JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

P.S.—I don't know whether you'll care much about the news at Hong-Kong, but we shall have a tidy hay season.

LETTER XVIII.—*To Richard Monckton Milnes,
Esq., M.P.*

SIR,—As I once had the honour to drive you down to Parliament, and as I found you such an affable gentleman, with no pride at all in you (I say nothing about the sixpence you gave me over your fare), I make no bones at all in writing these few lines to you, about your motion for private hanging. I see by the newspapers that you want to make a law to hang inside of the gaol, in a snug and quiet way ; and not to have the show in the open street. Pardon a cabman's boldness, but really, Mr Milnes, you can't have thought of the shocking consequence of your measure, if so be it had been carried out. What ! make a law for private hanging ! With one bit of parchment destroy what I'll be bold enough to call one of the chief amusements of the people ! Sir James Graham knows better than this ; for he generally contrives to have an execution on Easter and Whit-Monday, just by the way of an early whet to the appetites of the holiday-makers. First the Old Bailey and then Greenwich ; Mr Calcraft, the hangman—and then the fire-eater and the clown. Your bill, sir—do forgive my boldness—was very rash, and not

at all just. They've taken away bear-baiting and duck-hunting and dog-fighting from what they call the lower orders, and now you'd deprive 'em of their last and dearest privilege—you'd, with one dash of the pen, rob 'em of their own public gallows! And you call yourself a friend of them people, Mr Milnes—a stickler for their ancient sports and pastimes? I don't wonder that for once something like shame came over Parliament—that not forty conscientious members stopped to listen to you—and that, in a word, you were “counted out.”

I have said your bill was unjust, shamefully unjust, unless you can prove to me that there was a clause in it to what they call indemnify the house-keepers in the Old Bailey for their loss of vested interests, seeing that they make no end of money by letting their windows at a popular hanging. Why, a Hocker's worth any money to 'em; for it's odd how hanging brings down the pride of some of the upper classes, many of the nob's enjoying it quite as much as the lower orders, only that they give one or two guineas—according to the beauty of the murder—for comfortable sitting room. If the men they call the six clerks were indemnified, surely you would not rob the tradesmen of the Old Bailey.

But it really is shocking to see how a mere

member of Parliament will set himself up against a clergyman of Newgate! Didn't the Rev. Mr Davis preach that the whole use and beauty of hanging was to be found in making it public? According to him, if it was possible to hang a man where all England might see him strangled, why, all England would certainly be the better for it. I've no doubt that the cause of so much crime is in the smallness of the Old Bailey, that will only accommodate such a few! Why shouldn't the gallows be erected on Salisbury Plain, with cheap railway excursions from all parts on hanging days?

Pardon me, sir, but there never was such a mistake as to think to do away with the wickedness of hanging by making it private. In the first place, if to see a hanging is no warning to the beholder, do you think that to hear or read of a hanging would do all the good of an example? Does what men see, or what they hear, stir 'em the most? But let us suppose that a man is to be hanged inside of Newgate. Why, the penny-liners that get their sops-in-the-pan out of the condemned cell, why, they would write all sorts of pretty things, all kinds of interesting stories about the last minutes of the criminal, and so the curiosity of the town would be more agog than ever. The picture newspapers that publish the murderers' portraits—those family

papers for the instruction and amusement of the younger branches—would give half-a-dozen pictures where they now give one. The secrecy of the thing would give a flavour to the whole matter.

And now, suppose that a rich man was to be privately hanged: a banker, we'll say, or, saving your presence, even a member of Parliament. Well, we know how unbelieving is man. There's thousands of people who would never sleep quietly in their beds, for the thought that the said banker or member was never hanged at all, but was smuggled out alive in a coffin, and shipped abroad. Every year or so, there'd be a letter in the newspapers from somebody who had seen the banker somewhere in the Backwoods, where he had married one of the Chactaws, and got a family of ten children. No, Mr Milnes, private hanging won't do; the people aren't to be cheated out of their pleasure after that fashion. Besides, Mr Milnes, all hanging's a bungle. The gallows is condemned, marked to come down; timber by timber it's loosening, and it's no use trying to keep it together with small corking-pins. No, Mr Milnes, it will better become you, be more like your kind good-natured self, to give a pull to the planks, to bring the whole machine to the ground, to make it a thing of the past, like the bonfires that burnt witches,—and for the hangman thrown out of work, why, small

retiring allowances have been given to worse public servants.—Hoping, sir, that you'll excuse my boldness, I remain, your obedient servant,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

P.S.—You know my number, sir, and I'm always in Palace Yard.

LETTER XIX.—*To Isaac Moss, Slop-seller,
Portsmouth.*

DEAR ISAAC,—Sir Robert Peel has stood your friend ; and if you've only the money, and the freedom, and the luck, you may be Lord Mayor of London as soon as you like. You can't, as a Jew, sit in Parliament as yet ; but time goes round, Isaac, and I shouldn't wonder if some day that was to come. Only think if a Jew—an hon. member for Whitechapel—was some day to find himself alongside of a Colonel Sibthorpe ; for every Parliament has its Sibthorpe, just as every spring has its green geese.

Sir Robert Inglis, of course, stood up for Mother Church, who, in faith, must have a tremendous constitution, seeing how the dear creature has been ill-treated by all sorts of infidel politicians. I really do believe that Sibthorpe

wouldn't now trust Sir Robert with the church-plate; no, not even with the taking of the two-pences at the door of St Paul's, for fear he should cheat in his accounts.

Mr Plumptre would have nothing to do with the bill, because, he said, "every Christian man, who was sensible of his religious obligation, should consider what would be *for the honour* of the Most High." Ah, Isaac, there it is! What a lot of wickedness has been done in this pretty world of ours—and all with a conscience—for what Christians thought would be "for the honour of the Most High"! For such honour men have roasted one another, as they wouldn't roast live beasts, at a stake; for such honour they have done all sorts of wrong, shutting up their fellow-creatures in dungeons, and tearing and torturing them all manner of ways, as if they thought, when they did most wrong to mortal creatures, they did most honour to the good God that made them.

Well, Isaac, I'm only a cabman, but when I sometimes read the debates, I do now and then thank my stars that I'm out of Parliament. And then the conceit of them that's in it. When they've done anything that's good, what do they do? Why, they only walk about like the bird in the fable, in feathers of better people. They never do nothing of themselves. No good seed is ever

grown in Parliament : not a bit of it ; the thing's grown outside of the place, and then transplanted. Talk of the wisdom of Parliament, Isaac ! why, they get their wisdom from people who've never set their eyes upon Mr Speaker. What did Parliament ever *begin*, I should like to know ? That is, understand me, what that's good ? No, good laws—wise laws—are begun outside ; thought of, invented by quiet folks, who never think to put M.P. to their names ; and whose great trouble it is to get the good acknowledged. And when at last, after wasting I don't know how much of heaven's good time—after the rumpus of many, many years—Parliament consents to take the good thing, I'm hanged if the goose doesn't hatch the swan's egg, as if it was a thing laid by itself, and not put into its nest by other people.

“The honour of the Most High !” Surely, Isaac, the best way to show such honour is to love your fellow-creatures as the greatest work—so far as we know—of the Most High ; and not, poor small things as we are, to walk about the earth, and when we poke up our noses highest in the face of heaven, think we have then the best right to tread the hardest on the necks of everybody that don't agree with us. To hear a few folks talk in Parliament, you'd think that they'd assured to themselves all Paradise as a freehold, and standing

upon their rights, would set up in it man-traps and spring-guns against all intruders. However, never mind, Isaac. There was a time when a King of England would have drawn a tooth a day out of your jaws, if you didn't undraw your purse-strings; and now—so do this wicked world roll on—you may wear a Lord Mayor's chain, and, as a magistrate, commit vagrants to gaol like any Christian.

—Your friend, JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XX.—*To Mrs Hedgehog, New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—September's so near we can almost put our hand upon it, and yet I'm in London. It's a dreadful confession of poverty, but I can't help it. If I'm not ashamed to be seen on my stand, I'm not a licensed cabman. The only comfort there is, everybody that stays in town must be as poor as myself, and that, according to some folk's notions, is a blessing to think of. A purse that was dropped on the pavement of Regent Street lay there a week, and was at last picked up by a policeman. London never looked so poor and dull; for all the world like a fine lady in an undress gown, with all her paint wiped off. The opera is shut up, and the manager has

had a silver bed-candlestick given him by lords and dukes, because he has been so full of public spirit as to make his own fortune. By the way, grandmother, I don't know how it is with the player-folks in New York ; but here with us, if a man or woman want a bit of plate they've only to take a theatre. A playhouse is a short cut to a silversmith's. There isn't a London manager who isn't plated after this fashion, which shows there is no place for true gratitude like the green-room ; but I ask your pardon for talking of such matters, knowing what a low place you think the theatre. Parliament, like a goose that has been set upon too many eggs, has risen with half of 'em come to nothing. But this, grandmother, is the old trick. When the Parliament first opens, and Ministers come down with new law after law, 'why, what busy, bustling folks they seem ! What a look of business it gives to the whole thing ! But half of 'em is only for show ; just so many dummies to take in what shopkeepers call "an enlightened public." You know the bottles of red and blue that they have in apothecaries' shops ? Well, half the folks think 'em physic, when they're nothing in the world but coloured water. Sir James Graham's Medical Bill was just one of these things : nothing real in it ; but something made up for show ; just to give a colouring to business. Talking of

Parliament, a dreadful accident happened at the prorogation. You know it's the privilege of the Duke of Argyll to bear the royal crown before the Queen. Certain folks came into the world with certain privileges of the kind. One has a right to stir the royal tea-cup on the day of the coronation, another to put on the Queen's pattens whenever she shall walk in the city, another to present the monarch with a pint of periwinkles when he shall visit Billingsgate; and so forth: all customs of the good old times, when people thought kings and queens were angels in disguise, who had kindly left heaven just to give poor mortals here a lift—in fact, to make the world endurable. Well, the Duke of Argyll, walking backwards with the crown—going straightforwards not being at all the thing in the Court—fell, poor old gentleman, down some steps, and falling, dropt the crown! Pheugh! There was a shower of pearls and diamonds; for all the precious stones came rattling on the floor, just as if the Queen, like the little girl in the fairy story, had been talking jewels. There were thoughts, I'm told, of calling in the police to keep off the mob of peers; but altogether they behaved themselves very well, and not a precious stone was found missing. The accident, however, caused a great fuss; and I'm told, in order to prevent its happening again, Madame Tussaud has offered to

make a Duke of Argyll in wax, that, fitted up with proper wheels and springs, may be made to go backwards with no fear of a tumble. Should the thing succeed—and I don't see why it shouldn't—it would be a great saving in the way of salaries to the country, if a good many other Court officers were manufactured after the like fashion.

I'd almost forgotten to say that the King of the Dutch has been on a visit to us—and, as I've heard, a very decent sort of king he is. Of course he played while here at a little bit of soldiering; guards and grenadiers were turned out in Hyde Park, that he might review their helmets and bearskin caps. Isn't it odd, grandmother, that the first show kings and princes, when they come to us, want to stare at is a show of soldiers? just to see how nicely men are armed and mounted to kill men! They don't mean any harm by it, of course; but still—I can't help thinking it—it does appear to me, if Beelzebub was to go into a strange country—if, indeed, there is any country he's not yet visited—the sight he'd first like to see would be the sight of men taught the best way of cutting men's throats. And then (if he came here to London) he'd go down to Woolwich Marshes, to see what they call rocket-practice, and wouldn't he rub his hands, and switch about his tail, to see how rockets and shells split, break, tear away every-

thing before 'em, showing what pretty work they'd make of a solid square of living flesh, standing for so many pence a day to be made a target of? You'd think it would be some wicked spirit that would enjoy this fun; but no, grandmother, it isn't so; quite the contrary; it's kings and princes. And yet I should like to have some king come over here who wouldn't care to go a-soldiering in Hyde Park; who wouldn't think of rocket-practice; but who, on the contrary, would go about to our schools and our hospitals, and our asylums, and all places where man does what he can to help man; to assist and comfort him like a fellow-creature, and not to tear him limb from limb like a devil.

Our Queen has gone to Germany to see where Prince Albert was born. Well, there's something pretty and wife-like in the thought of this, and I like this. There was a dreadful fear among some of the nobs in Parliament, that while the Queen was away the kingdom would drop to pieces. But it isn't so: the tax-gatherer calls just the same as ever. The Queen took ship, and landed at Antwerp—at the Quai Vandyke; now, Vandyke, you must know, was a famous painter; and abroad, they've a fashion of naming streets and places after folks that's called geniuses. We haven't come to that yet. Only think of our

having a Hogarth Square, or a Shakspeare instead of a Waterloo Bridge! And then for statues in the streets, we don't give them to authors and painters, but only to kings and dukes that don't pay their debts.

Still, I do feel for her Gracious Majesty. Dear soul! Isn't it dreadful that a gentlewoman can't step abroad—can't take boat, but what there's a hundred guns blazing, firing away at her,—as if the noise of cannon and the smell of gunpowder was like the songs of nightingales and the scent of roses! How royalty keeps its hearing, I can't tell. When the dear lady got upon the Rhine, there were the guns blazing away as though heaven and earth were come together. It's odd enough that people will think a great noise is a great respect; and that the heartiest welcome can only be given by gunpowder. It seems that the folks were putting up a statue to a musician named Beethoven, and the Queen of England and the Prince were just in time to pay their respects to the bronze. Mr Beethoven while alive was nobody; but it's odd how a man's worth is raked up from his coffin! And so it's a great comfort to great men who, when in this world, are thought very small indeed, to think how big they'll be upon earth after they've gone to heaven; a comfort for 'em, when they may happen to want a

coat, to think of the suit of bronze or marble that kings and queens will afterwards give 'em. If, now, there's any English composer, any man with a mind in him, forced, for want of better employment—forced to give young ladies lessons on the piano when he should be doing sonatas and senfonias, and that sort of thing,—why, I say, it must be a comfort to him to know that folks can honour genius when it's put up by way of statue in the market-place.

One of the prettiest stories I've heard of the jaunt is this, that the Queen and Albert went in a quiet way to visit the Prince's old schoolmaster—if this isn't enough to make all schoolmasters in England hold their heads up half a yard higher ! Besides, it mayn't show a bad example to high folks who keep tutors and governesses.

Altogether the Queen must be pleased with her trip, and I should think not the less pleased where the folks made the least noise ; although, from what I read in one of the papers, everybody doesn't think so ; for the writer complains that there was “ no shouting or noise, only that *eternal bowing* which so strikes a traveller, and which would make one believe that beings across the Channel were formed with some natural affinity between their right hands and their hats.” Really, to my mind there's something more pleasing,

more rational-like, in one human creature quietly bowing to another, than in shouting and hallooing at him like a wild Indian. But, then, people do so like noise!

You'll be sorry to hear, grandmother, that your pets, the bishops, are again in trouble. I'm sure of it, bishops were never intended to have anything to do with money: they always tumble into such mistakes whenever they touch it. How is it to be expected that they should know the mystery of pounds, shillings, and pence,—they who can't abide earthly vanities—they who are always above this world, though they never go up, as I hear, with Mr Green in his balloon? Well, it seems that the bishops have had a mint of money put into their hands that they may build new churches for their fellow-sinners, whom they call spiritually destitute. Well, would you think it?—in a moment of strange forgetfulness, they've laid out so much money upon palaces for themselves, that they can't build the proper number of churches for the poor? The bishops have taken care of the bishops—and for the spiritually destitute, why, they may worship in highways and byways, in fields and on commons. Of course the bishops never meant this. No; it has all come about from their knowing nothing of the value of money. Still, what's called the lower orders won't believe

this. And isn't it a shocking thing to consider that the poor man may look at Bishop So-and-so with a grudge in his eye, saying to himself, "Yes, you've built yourself a fine house—you've got your fine cedars, and all that King Solomon talks about, in your own palace; but where's my sittings in the church?—where, bishop, is my bench in the middle aisle?"

This is so dreadful to think of, that I can't write any further upon it—and so no more from your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XXI.—*To Sir F. B. Tyrell, Bart., M.P.
for North Essex.*

SIR,—As I consider every gentleman that I have had the pleasure, or the honour, or the ill-luck as it may be, of driving, a sort of acquaintance—for where money passes, it in a manner binds men—I make no difficulty in sending you these few lines.

You have been dining with the Conservative Maldon True Blue Club. True Blue, I suppose, means heaven's blue—that is, blue as true as heaven. All the speeches were printed in the *Essex Standard*, and afterwards, where I saw 'em,

in the *Morning Post*. Your speech, Sir James, or Sir John (for, upon my life, I forget which it is, so I'll call you Sir James upon chance)—your speech drenched me, as a Christian cabman, quite over. You rose to drink the health of the Duke of Wellington. Well, I don't object to that. But, I'm sure of it,—never once thinking of your Testament, you went on in this manner—and mind, it was only just *after* dinner—

“It had been said of the noble Duke, that he was *not only* the conqueror of Bonaparte—but *the greatest man SINCE THE TIME OF THE SAVIOUR!*”

You thought *if* that language was “too strong to apply to him as a man, his claims upon the country could not be overrated.” Now, Sir James, IF the language was too strong (for you said “*if*”), why did you use it? Why make any comparison between the Saviour of the world and the colonel of a Grenadier Guards? The Duke, no doubt, has claims upon the country; though some of these claims, by-the-by, are regularly settled by the country every pay-day, and come in regularly with his rents of Strathfieldsaye. Nevertheless, whatever claims he may have outstanding against us, I don't think he can enforce any of 'em in the spirit of Him who said, “Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate

you ; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." The Duke of Wellington never talks in this way in the House of Lords ; but do we expect that he should ? His business of life, Sir James, has been to fight ; and though I think the trade a very bad one, nevertheless he made the best of the wickedness. But, Sir James, you, it seems, would bind up the Sermon on the Mount with the "Wellington Despatches ;" and seem to think the battle of Waterloo a finer acted thing than that small incident rehearsed at the words, "Take up thy bed and walk."

Sometime ago, the son of a Christian judge, passing through a London street, saw, as he thought, a blasphemous representation of the Deity exposed in a window. In a trice he smashed the glass and tore up the offensive picture. Right glad am I, for the sake of the convivial True Blues, that young Mr Bruce was not at the Maldon dinner ; otherwise, where the chairman found a companion picture for Jesus in the Grenadier tenant of Apsley House, Mr Bruce might have forgotten Sir James Tyrell in what he might have thought the blasphemer.

"Our Saviour" *and* the Duke of Wellington ! And among the company, "which was upwards of seventy in number," were members of Parliament, captains, esquires, and—my ink turns almost red

with shame as I write it—and clergymen! There were pious Christians, teachers of Christian flocks, “their eyes red with wine, and their teeth white with milk,” who sat quietly upon their seats, and heard the British Grenadier paralleled with Jesus Christ! Answer, Reverends Leigh, Williams, Bruce, and Henshawe—was it not so? O Conservative clergymen! O True Blue disciples of beeswing port! O knife-and-fork apostles! when, mute as fish, you consented to the speech of Tyrell, and so forgot your Master, did you not, in your souls, hear “the cock crow”?

Well, Sir James, I do recollect what my old grandmother taught me of the New Testament; and although I’m but a cabman, I hope I do feel, if I’d ever had the presumption to compare anybody to the blessed Saviour, I couldn’t have gone to the barracks for him.

I think the Duke of Wellington has said that “no man who’s nice about religion should be a soldier!” Perhaps you never heard of this, and thought that to hunt the French out of Spain was almost quite as great as to cast out devils.

“The greatest man since the time of our Saviour!” And there have been no other men, Sir James, sent into the world to pick their fellow-creatures, as I may say, out of the mud? There have been no Shakspeare? No Newton? No

Howard? No! Ball-cartridge has been the true manna of life; and the words "Feed my sheep" are nothing to "Make ready, present, fire!"

But, Sir James, I've done. I know you didn't mean what you said. No: the truth is, you're a regular Conservative, and so—like other darkened folks—you must make an idol out of something. Rather than have none at all, you'd set up the Duke of Wellington's bootjack. Still, among the True Blues, you overshot the mark, and must be by this time perfectly ashamed of yourself. Nevertheless, your wickedness ought not to go unpunished: and because, in a port-wine moment, you compared the Iron Duke to the Lamb of the world, I'd make you undergo a month's penance. You should be covered all over with pipeclay, and eat parched peas off a drum-head.

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XXII.—*To Mrs Hedgehog, New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—As I don't think you have any liking for railways—being, like Colonel Sibthorpe, one of those folks loving the good old times when travelling was as sober a thing as a waggon and four horses could make it—I really

don't see how I'm to write you anything of a letter. There's nobody in town, and nothing in the papers but plans of railways, that in a little time will cover all England like a large spider's net; and, as in the net, there will be a good many flies caught and gobbled up by those who spin it. Nevertheless, though I know you don't agree with me any more than Colonel Sibthorpe does, it is a fine sight to open the newspapers and see the railway schemes. What mountains of money they bring to the mind! And then for the wonders they're big with—why, properly considered, aren't they a thousand times more wonderful than anything in the “Arabian Nights' Entertainments”? There we have a flying carriage to be brought to every man's door! All England made to shake hands with itself in a few hours! And when London can in an hour or so go to the Land's End for a gulp of sea-air, and the Land's End in the same time come to see the shows of London, shan't all of us the better understand one another? shan't we all be brought together, and made, as we ought to be, one family of? It's coming fast, grandmother. Now pigs can travel, I don't know how far, at a halfpenny a head, we don't hear the talk that used to be of “the swinish multitude.” And isn't it a fine thing—I know you don't think so, but isn't it—to know that all that's been done,

and all that's to do, will be done because Englishmen have left off cutting other men's throats? That peace has done it all! If they oughtn't to set up a dove with an olive branch at every railway terminus, I'm an impostor and no true cabman! Yes, grandmother, peace has done it all! Only think of the iron that had been melted into cannon, and round-shot and chain-shot, and all other sorts of shot, that the devils on a holiday play at bowls with!—if the war had gone on—all the very same iron that's now peaceably laid upon sleepers! Think of the iron that had been fired into the sea, and banged through quiet people's houses, and sent smashing squares and squares of men—God's likenesses in red, blue, and green coats, hired to be killed at so many pence a day,—only think what would have been this wicked, I will say it, this blasphemous waste of metal—that, as it is, has been made into steam-engines! Very fine, indeed, they say, is the roar of artillery; but what is it to the roar of steam? I never see an engine, with red-hot coals and its clouds of steam and smoke, that it doesn't seem to me like a tremendous dragon that has been tamed by man to carry all the blessings of civilisation to his fellow-creatures. I've read about knights going through the skies on fiery monsters—but what are they to the engineers, at two pound five a week? What is any squire

among 'em all to the humblest stoker? And then I've read about martial trumpets, why, they haven't, to my ears, half the silver in their sound as the railway whistle! Well, I should like the ghost of Bonaparte to get up some morning, and take the *Times* in his thin hands. If he wouldn't turn yellower than ever he was at St Helena! There he'd see plans for railways in France—*belly France*, as I believe they call it—to be carried out by Frenchmen and Englishmen. Yes; he wouldn't see 'em mixing bayonets, trying to poke 'em in one another's bowels, that a few tons of blood might, as they call it, water his laurels (how any man can wear laurels at all, I can't tell, they must smell so of the slaughter-house!)—he wouldn't see 'em charging one another on the battle-field, but quietly ranged cheek by jowl, in the list of directors! Not exchanging bullets, but clubbing together their hard cash.

Consider it, grandmother, isn't it droll! Here, in these very lists, you see English captains and colonels in company with French viscounts and barons, and I don't know what, planning to lay iron down in France—to civilise and add to the prosperity of Frenchmen! The very captains and colonels who—but for the peace—would be blowing French ships out of water, knocking down French houses, and all the while swearing it, and believing

it, too, that Frenchmen were only sent into this world to be killed by Englishmen, just as boys think frogs were spawned only to be pelted at! Ah, only give her time, and Peace—timid dove as she is—will coo down to the trumpet.

Now, grandmother, only to think of Lord Nelson as a railway director on the Boulogne line to Paris! Well, I know you'll say it, the world's going to be turned upside down. Perhaps it is; and after all, it mightn't be the worse now and then for a little wholesome shaking. They do say there's to be a rail from Waterloo to Brussels, and the Duke of Wellington, the Iron Duke, with, I've no doubt, iron enough in him for the whole line, is to be chairman of the directors.

The Prince Joinville is now and then looking about our coasts to find out, it is said, which is the softest part of us, in the case of a war, to put his foot upon us. Poor fellow! he's got the disease of glory; only, as it sometimes happens with the smallpox, it has struck inward—it can't come out upon him. When we've railways laid down, as I say, like a spider's web all over the country, won't it be a little hard to catch us asleep? For, you see, just like the spider's web, the electric telegraph (inquire what sort of a thing it is, for I haven't time to tell you)—the electric telegraph will touch a line of the web, when down will come a tremendous

spider in a red coat with all sorts of murder about him! Mind, grandmother, let us hope it never will happen; but when folks who'd molest us, know it *can* come about, won't they let us alone? Depend upon it, we're binding war over to keep the peace, and the bonds are made of railway iron!

You'd hardly think it—you who used to talk to me about the beauty of glory (I know you meant nothing but the red coats and the fine epaulets; for that so often is woman's notion of glory, though, bless 'em! they're among the first to make lint, and cry over the sons of glory, with gashes spoiling all their fine feathers)—and you'd hardly think it, but they're going to put up a statue to the man who first made boiling water to run upon a rail. It's quite true: I read it only a day or two ago. They're going to fix up a statue to George Stephenson at Newcastle. How you will cast up your dear old eyes when you hear of this! you, who've only thought that statues should be put up to Queen Anne, and George the Third, and his nice son, George the Fourth, and such people! I should only like a good many of the statues here in London, to be made to take a cheap train down to Newcastle, to see it. If, dirty as they are—and dirty as they were—they wouldn't blush as red as a new copper halfpenny! Why, those statues—especially when they've queens and kings in 'em—

are the most unfeelingest of metal! What a lot of mangled bodies, and misery, and housebreaking, and wickedness of all sorts, carried on and made quite lawful by a uniform, may we see—if we choose to see at all—about the statue of what is called a conqueror! What a firing of houses, what shame—that, because you're a woman, I won't more particularly write about—we might look upon under the statue, that is only so high, because it has so much wickedness to stand upon! If the statue could feel at all, wouldn't it put up its hands, and hide its face, although it was made of the best of bronze? But Mr Stephenson will look kindly and sweetly about him; he will know that he has carried comfort, and knowledge, and happiness to the doors of millions!—that, that he has brought men together, that they might know and love one another. This is something like having a statue! I'm sure of it—when George the Fourth is made to hear the news (for kings are so very long before the truth comes to 'em), he'd like to gallop off to the first melter's and go at once into the nothing that men think him.

And besides all this, the railways have got a king! When you hear of a king in England, I know your old thoughts go down to Westminster Abbey, and you think of nothing but bishops and peers, and all that sort of thing, kissing the king's

cheeks, and the holy oil put upon the royal head, that the crown, I suppose, may sit the more comfortably upon it; but this is another sort of king, Mr King Hudson the First. I have read somewhere at a bookstall, that Napoleon was crowned with the Iron Crown of Italy. Well, King Hudson has been crowned with the Iron Crown of England!—a crown melted out of pig-iron, and made in a railway furnace.

I've somewhere seen the picture of the River Nile, that with the lifting of his finger made the river flow over barren land, and leave there all sorts of blessings. Well, King Hudson is of this sort; he has made the molten iron flow over all sorts of places, and so bring forth good fruits wherever it went.—So no more, from your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

LETTER XXIII.—*To Mrs Hedgehog, New York.*

DEAR GRANDMOTHER,—Of course you must have heard of the potato blight. There are some subjects that women don't want newspapers to teach 'em about, and "potatoes is one." I can't tell how your red Yorks and Kidneys may be in

your part of the world : with us, they're things to weep over. But, of course, your potatoes are all right : you've done nothing to bring down rot upon 'em from heaven. But it's very different with us, grandmother. Our potato blight was got up by her Majesty's Ministers, and—would you think it?—consented to by her blessed Majesty ! It is now as plain as light that the great Maynooth has done it all ! One William Ferrie—who writes in a hair shirt, with a girdle of tenpenny nails next his skin—has let out the terrible secret in the *Witness*, an Edinburgh paper (Nov. 8). He groans as follows :—

“Had *we set ourselves to consider* by what display of His sovereignty the Lord could most thoroughly and very severely have distressed Ireland, whilst He in some degree afflicted also both England and Scotland, *in token of His indignation* at the sin of their joint rulers in enacting that which, *whilst it insulted Him*, was justified on the plea that it would benefit Ireland, could we have conceived *a more effectual* one than the blasting of the potato crop !”

Now, grandmother, this, I know, is stuff after your own heart. Popery is at the root of the root ! The Lord has been insulted ; and His terrible vengeance is a blight upon potatoes ! There can be no doubt that this is the fact—a fact so after

the good old times! Nevertheless, for my part, I think it rather hard that Protestant potatoes—potatoes that, if they could talk, would cry, “No surrender!”—should suffer equally with potatoes of Roman Catholic principles. I know it’s very conceited in me to give an opinion against men like William Ferrie—men who always bawl and scribble (I’ve heard ’em in their pulpits, as well as read their stuff in print) as if they were nothing less than livery servants to Providence, and knew all the household secrets! And Willy Ferrie, depend on’t, is flunky after this fashion.

A rotten potato is a rotten potato—at least so I should have thought it afore I’d been taught better by ranting Willy; but now, I can see into the thing just as well as if Erasmus Wilson—the magician of the microscope—had lent me his glass, and his eyes and brains into the bargain. I can see into the decayed parts, for I won’t bother your dear head with hard words (though when a man’s got ’em for the first time, he likes to sport ’em), and can behold nothing but what you used to call “the murdering Papishes.” I’ve a ’tato before me, as rotten as the heart of any talking ’tato that ever spouted blarney in the face of starvation. Well, with the microscope, I can see the Old Woman in Scarlet, with her toe polished with holy

kisses—cardinals and abbots, and friars and priests, in white and red and gold—and canopies, and dolls of the Virgin, and saints, and little boys swinging censers. I can see all this by the assistance of Willie Ferrie—all of it in one potato—as plainly as once I saw all sorts of sharks in a drop of New River water. I shall write this blessed night to Sir Andrew Agnew (by the way, dear grandmother, it was said that Sir Andrew was lately caught in a Sunday train—but it isn't true: it's now proved to be somebody I won't mention to you, who sometimes, out of spite to the Baronet, goes about in his likeness)—I'll write to Sir Andrew, and get him to give a Potato Lecture, after this fashion, at Exeter Hall. If with one potato he wouldn't make the women cry, then there's no weeping to be got out of an onion! Sir Andrew with one rotten potato, like David with a smooth pebble, would kill Goliath Peel as dead as Tamworth mutton.

And yet when it's plain that it's the Maynooth Grant, and not the wet—certainly not the wet—that's rotted the potato, we find big-wig doctors sent to Ireland (a further insult to Providence, grandmother) to inquire, as it is presumptuously said, into the cause of the disease. Why, I know what you or any other good old woman would

have done; after you'd tasted the Maynooth Grant—and there's no mistaking the flavour—in your early kidneys, you'd at once have stopped the rot;—and how would you have done it? Why, you'd have got the Queen to send a message to Parliament, to order a repeal of the Maynooth Grant. Of course you would. But no: sinful men are made foolhardy by success. Because, when they granted Catholic 'Mancipation, the fly spared our turnips, it was thought we could give money to Maynooth College, and yet save our 'tatoes! Ha! Dear grandmother, when you take your kidney baked, steamed, or mashed, think of us sinners, and say a short prayer for us.

I'd forgotten to tell you that the potatoes in Belgium are as bad, or even worse, than ours. Besides the wet, I can't precisely tell the cause of this; because there's been no Maynooth Grant there, nearly all the wicked people being Catholics,—but then, I suppose, that's it. Mr Flunky Ferrie declares that “the present judgment is connected with Popery.” There's no doubt of it:—

“The blight being general over three kingdoms, points out *the rulers of the land* as the persons whose sin has secured it; and the blight being in the potato crop, directs attention to their dealings with Ireland as

the particular sins which have immediately called it down."

This is, doubtless, true enough, and no less true because the whole people must suffer for the dozen rulers. Now, had the blight fallen only upon Tamworth, or Strathfieldsaye, or all the 'tatoes of all the Ministers, the disease would doubtless have been hushed up. Yes,—it was necessary that every man should suffer in his potatoes; not only the sinful Protestant who consented to the Grant, but the lucky Catholics who accepted it. The judgment fell upon all tribes alike—the tribes of the Established Church and of the Church of Babylon. The Bishop of London's 'tatoes are in as forlorn a way as the 'tatoes of the Irish Lion of Judah: that's some comfort, grandmother.

Well, and what does this blight say to the Catholics—what does every potato cry (with the little voice that what they call tubercular consumption has left it)—what does it cry to the "Papishes," but, "Change your religion, and henceforth be happy in your 'tatoes!" At first, I thought this change of religion a ticklish matter; but when I see how easily the nobs—the bright examples of the world—do it, why, it's only conceit in smaller people to hesitate: for I've just read a long story about the Emperor Nicholas, who's in Italy

with his poor dying wife. (By the way, it seems that the Emperor, like many other folks, is such a good-tempered, jolly fellow when he's out, that it's a pity he should ever go home again.) The Emperor's daughter, the Duchess Olga (a good playbill name, isn't it?) was to marry an Austrian Archduke; but her father wouldn't let her alter her religion from the Greek to the Catholic Church. Now, however, Nicholas has thought better of it, —and his daughter may change her religion for a husband, just as she'll put on a new gown to be married in. When emperors and kings play at hustle-cap with creeds, isn't it downright impudence in mere nobodies to be nice!

When I think, though, that the Maynooth Grant has brought the rot in potatoes, I can't help looking round about the world, and fearing what may by-and-by become of us for our friendship with heathens. We take tea of the Chinese—a people, evidently an insult to heaven—though long put up with, and mustering hundreds of millions. Doesn't Mr Ferrie fear that some day all us men may rise in the morning with pig-tails, and the women get up with a little foot apiece? We buy rhubarb from the wicked Turk. A time may come when — for a visitation — the drug may deceive all the doctors, and Old Gooseberry only know

what mischief may happen ! We get tallow from Russia. How do I know that I mayn't in every six to a pound, without thinking of it, set up a candle to the Greek Church ! Will Flunky Ferrie think of these things ?—for there are many of his kidney who 'd like to be enlightened.

But, O grandmother ! perhaps the worst is to come. The Church is really now in danger ! I've not had a fare up Ludgate Hill lately, but I've no doubt St Paul's is cracked from top to bottom. Would you believe it ? David Salomons, the late Sheriff (who was sweetly cheated out of his gown as Alderman, the said gown being now on the shoulders of Church-and-State Moon, Esq.)—David Salomons, a Jew, has given £1666, 13s. 4d. to buy a scholarship of £50 a year for the city of London, and the city—Gog and Magog quivered as with ague—has been mean enough to take it. Oh for the good old times, when they used to spit upon Jews in the Exchange ! And now we take their money from 'em ! I know you 'll think it a blow at the Church. The scholarship is said to be “open to members of every religious persuasion ;” this is a flam-blind. The gift is a sly attack on the Established Church. It is the evident intention of the Minorities to turn us all Jews. Never has there been such a blow struck at the vested interests

of Smithfield Pig-market. Sir Robert Inglis—whom I took up at Exeter Hall a night or two ago—says, in two years there 'll be a grand Rabbi in Lambeth Palace.—Your affectionate grandson,

JUNIPER HEDGEHOG.

THE END.

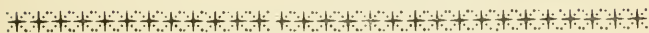


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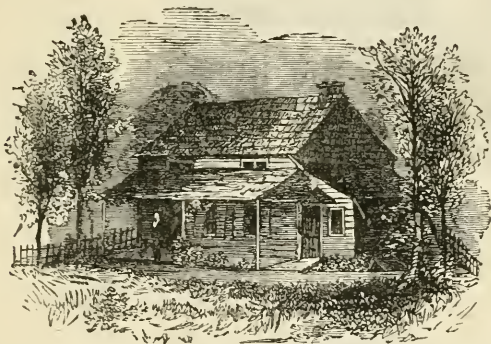
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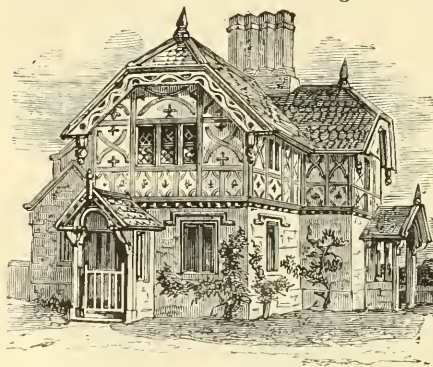
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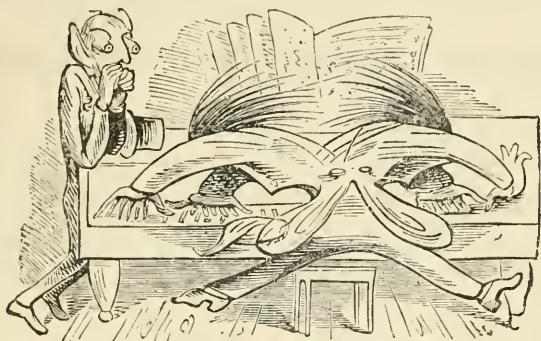
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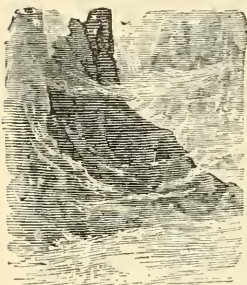
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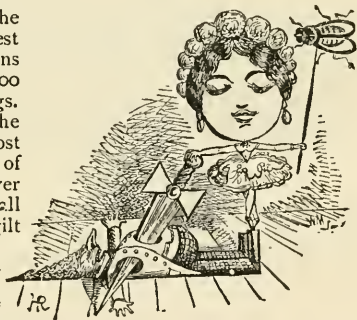
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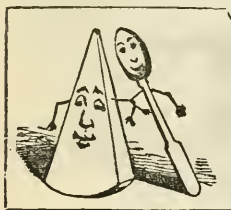
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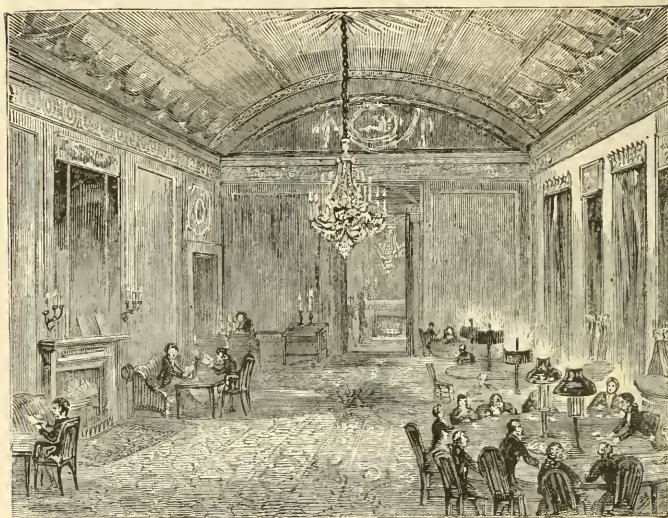
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